The West

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UNION LABEL

Wednesday, April 13, 1910.

LOCAL OPTION.

Saskatoon will have a local option contest this fall, and The Phoenix of that city is confident of the defeat of the measure. In view of the probability of a contest in this city, the views of the Saskatoon paper will be interesting to our citizens. The Phoenix in the following article admits the final victory of temperance, but declares that the time is inopportune for the contest in that city or any other western city:

"There is not the slightest doubt that the local option movement has taken not only a firm but a permanent hold on the rural districts, both in Canada and the United States. It is entirely probable that the campaign next winter in this province will result in the cutting out of a number of licenses in the rural districts, making it impossible in many others to get a license, but the outcome in the cities and towns cannot be predicted with the same degree of certainty. The matter of getting hotel accommodation is associated, not only in thought, but in practice, with the holding of a license. Hotel accommodation is a most important matter in a western town. Every citizen of central Saskatchewan knows that. All business people also know how important it is that incoming prospectors shall find comfortable places to stay in the town or city to which they come. Capital will be less likely to invest in the hotel business in the new small towns if licenses are not available. This fact will influence many business men to vote against local option, not because they want liquor themselves, or even want to see it sold, but purely from a business point of view that they want to see an hotel or hotels in their town. This will be the prevailing argument with a considerable number of voters when they go to the polls next December. The acute need of hotel accommodation in many places, even where there are hotels now, will be a formidable influence in the matter, and many men who depreciate the rum traffic will nevertheless vote in favor of a license as against local prohibition.

"It is a plain fact, if one may judge the signs of the times at all correctly, that the public mind is determined that the present system of liquor selling shall be abolished. In the older states and provinces there has been an ebb and flow, victory and defeat, for temperance reform, but social economists are substantially a unit in the belief that some other system than the present licensing system must be evolved in order to check the ruinous liquor traffic now in vogue on this continent. If the business were dissociated from the hotel business it would be a simpler problem. Years ago the retail liquor trade was associated with the grocery business. It has since been separated, and at the present time a man may run his grocery business separate and distinct from the liquor trade and on equal footing with his competitors. It will come to that in the hotel business. There is no reason why an hotel business might not be made to pay in a growing western town apart from the sale of liquor. Possibly there would not be a willingness to invest in hotel property for the dividends would not be so large. Nevertheless, if society makes up its mind that this separation has to come and that liquor selling must be placed upon some other business basis the sooner a satisfactory solution is worked out the better. It is hard to see how any system of prohibition could be successfully carried out in this country when such a large proportion of the people want to drink, but even though there is a demand on the part of a large number for intoxicating beverages, the moral demand of another and probably a preponderating, element in the state, is strong for liquor reform.

"We are inclined to think that the temperance forces would have been well advised to have restricted their local option campaign to the rural districts this year. By so doing they would have gained certain ground from which they could advance to other ground. The campaign upon which they have embarked is so large that the results are not likely to be as satisfactory as the friends of temperance would desire, and it is quite possible that the vote may give local option a very decided set back. We are inclined to think that so far as Saskatoon is concerned local option will be voted down by a considerable majority, not because the people here are anti-temperance, but because they are not prepared for such a radical step at this period in the city's devlopment as would entail a great economic loss to the hotel interests and discourage the building of hotels at a time when they are greatly needed to provide accommodation for this growing city."

A FARCE.

One of the best jokes in the history of Canadian parliamentary proceedings of recent years has been the so-called investigation by four Liberal members, and three Liberal lawyers, into the Lumsden charges. Those who followed the doings of the special committee selected by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, were impressed with the irresistible humor of the fact that four Government supporters were gravely considering serious accusations against the administration. And in order that they might be perfectly safe in bringing in a verdict of "not guilty" they secured the able assistance of three eminent counsel. One of these, Mr. R. C. Smith, the batonnier of the Montreal bar, is defending the Transcontinental Commission. Mr. Smith was a Liberal candidate against Mr. H. B. Ames in St. Antoine division at the last general elections. The Committee of four Liberal members then appointed a lawyer to represent the public. This gentleman turned out to be Mr. F. H. Chrysler, K.C., prominent in parliamentary practice, an ex-president of the Ottawa Liberal Association, who since 1896 has drawn in legal fees from the Government some $35,000. Mr. Chrysler represents the public as against the Government which is on trial. Then the sub-engineers mentioned by Mr. Lumsden as among those in whom he had lost confidence, are represented by Mr. Jack Moss, K.C., of Toronto, who comes of a historic Liberal family. There is the situation. The three lawyers are paid by the Government, the four Liberal members who constitute the committee are stalwart henchmen of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who have in the past done faithful service in the "blocker's brigade," and yet surprise is expressed that the public has not only lost all interest, but all confidence in the proceedings of this star chamber, where the rattle of the loaded dice is plainly heard. Nothing more ludicrous in the shape of a farce was ever presented on the political stage. — Toronto Saturday Night (Ind.)

WANT THE LANDS.

"That the Liberals of Manitoba in convention assembled, believe that a satisfactory adjustment of the boundary question consists in the acceptance of the extension of the boundaries as offered by the Dominion Government, provided it is accomplished by the transfer to this province of the lands, minerals, timber, fisheries and other natural resources of the added territory."

The Liberals of Manitoba must have been studying the financial condition of Saskatchewan, and realize the necessity of the control of the public domain by the provinces. In moving the adoption of this the Liberal leader, Mr. Norris, pointed out that with control of the public domain a railroad would be built diagonally across the province to Hudson's Bay without the expenditure of a dollar of the present revenue. He claimed that by securing the control of the public domain the province would be making an excellent bargain. What kind of bargain must Saskatchewan have made?

CURRENT COMMENT

(Farmers' Sun)

The Laurier government can scarcely be congratulated on the amount of foresight shown in connection with the recent trade complications with the United States, and the occurences leading thereto. It ratified the French treaty, a good enough instrument in itself, but utterly insignificant in comparison with the maintenance of friendly commercial relations with the United States, although repeatedly warned that such ratification would be construed as undue discrimination against the United States, and thereby subjecting Canadian exports to the American market to the maximum rates of duty. Then, when actually brought face to face with the danger of seeing the maximum enforced, on the date fixed therefor, the Government found itself in a very awkward dilemma. It was faced by the possibility of an insistent demand from the United States for the same terms that had been conceded to France and by an equally insistent order from the protected interest in this country that the present scale of protection against American competition be maintained. Fortunately the leaders of the Republican party in the United States were in an equally difficult predicament. Republican leaders, with the November elections for Congress in sight, and with many of their followers in revolt against the regular scale of duties imposed under the Payne-Aldrich tariff dreaded the political effect of an increase in those rates in so far as Canada is concerned, accompanied as this would have been by the application of the Canadian surtax to American imports. More fortunate still there was in the President's chair a man with really enlightened views as to the relations that ought to exist between these neighboring countries. The result is, apparently, that Canadian exports to the United States are to continue to be entered at present Customs rates in return for concessions by Canada a good deal less than those which were made to France—concessions that the protected interest in Canada will doubtless protest against, but the protests will be nothing to what they would have been had the Laurier Government been compelled to give to the United States everything that was conceded to France. All's well that ends well, but for the fortunate ending the government is a god deal more indebted to circumstances than to its own statesmanship and skill.

(Toronto News)

Mr. Monk and his little group of recalcitrants demand Mr. Borden's removal from the Conservative leadership. Mr. Borden is to be assassinated because of his attitude towards naval defence. Mr. Monk had determined that the party should oppose both the organization of a Canadian navy and a contribution to the Admiralty. He announced his policy at Lachine, and came to Ottawa de termined to force his views upon the Opposition. But Mr. Monk is a feeble person at best, and had set himself a task which no man could accomplish.

All the traditions of the Conservative party are centred in British connection and devotion to the Empire. It was inconceivable that, in order to serve the paltry ambitions of Mr. Monk, it could be made to discredit all its traditions and all its professions. Failing, therefore, to drive Mr. Borden and the Opposition M r.Monk set out to effect a change in the leadership of the party, and to accomplish his purpose by other methods.

In this, again, he is not likely to succeed. There seems to be no one in sight as well fitted as Mr. Borden for the office of leader, and no one who could be more safely trusted in the office of Prime Minister. It may be that sometimes he is more of a statesman than a politician. It may be that he has not always played down to the prejudices of certain elements. It may be that he has not turned with every wind that blows in order to snatch a petty party advantage. In the long run, however, consistency and integrity are a great asset even to a politician, and, if they do not always ensure immediate popularity, they give the strength which endures.

The future movements of Mr. Monk can be of no particular interest, and are not likely to be of particular importance. He has shown no aptitude for politics. He has failed to achieve any measure of success in Quebec. He creates no enthusiasm in his own party, and is not taken seriously by his opponents. Many persons believe that he aspired to the leadership of the Conservative party, and felt that he should have been chosen when the choice of caucus fell upon Mr. Borden. His mistaken ambition and his great disappointment possibly explain the course that he has pursued during the last five or six years. This course has brought a man who has failed to make an impression upon his own province to attempt a dictatorship over the whole Conservative party. The situation is absurd to the last degree, and, if nothing else happens, fortunately, Quebec Conservatives will be rid of the impotent leadership by which they have been embarrassed ever since the accession of the Laurier Government to office.

RAILWAY LEGISLATION

In its legislation guaranteeing the bonds of the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific Branch Lines Company, the Government has grossly neglected the interests of the Province.

The Opposition does not oppose the principle of assisting railways through the guaranteeing of their bonds, as a portion of the Government press has alleged; but it does believe in the principle of concession for concession; that in return for the extensive use of public credit the people should receive substantial concessions equal, at least, to those obtained by other provinces.

These companies have had their bonds guaranteed for 1,625 miles of road to the extent of $13,000 per mile with interest at 4 per cent. for 20 years. This guarantee may be increased to $15,000. The liability thus assumed by the Province is $21,000,000 on principal account, and $25,200,000 for interest. In return for this great assistance, by which these companies are enabled to extend their systems, the Province has received nothing but a guarantee that the roads aided will be constructed within a given time and according to the standard of the C. N. R. main line.

Instead of adopting the policy of concession for concession the Government conceded practically everything that the companies requested and, in the matter of concessions, received practically nothing in return. The Government has not control over rates, nor has it one of the many other concessions which other provinces that have aided the Canadian Northern insisted upon and secured. From the very nature of the case the lines must pass entirely out of the hands of the Provincial Government.

Ontario's Agreement.

In 1904 the Ross Government in Ontario granted a cash and land subsidy to the G. T. P. and to the Huntsville and Lake of Bays railways. In return it secured control of rates, together with other concessions. The control of rates section reads:

"The rates for passengers and freight which may be charged by each of the said companies on the said railways shall be such as may be approved of by the Railway Committee of the Executive Council of Ontario, and each of the said companies shall comply with any conditions now or hereafter imposed by any act respecting the granting of aid to railways."

This section was placed in the agreement, notwithstanding the fact that the Railway Commission was already in existence.

Another concession reads as follows:

"Each of the said companies shall be obliged upon the request of any township or county municipality through which the line of railway passes, to carry material, gravel or stone, required for improving any of the roads within any such municipality at the actual cost of handling and carriage."

The Ross Government also guaranteed the bonds of the James' Bay Railway (C.N.R.) and among several concessions received one granting to settlers and bona fide land seekers a passenger rate of one cent a mile and a half-rate on settlers' effects.

What Manitoba Got.

In 1901, when the Manitoba Government guaranteed the bonds of the Canadian Northern, it secured stated reductions in rates, and general control over them for thirty years—control, not only within the Province, but as far east as Port Arthur. Nothing was left to chance, or the will of the railway company.

When the legislation guaranteeing the railway bonds was being enacted, the Opposition urged upon the Government the necessity of securing control of rates, Mr. Haultain introducing a motion to that effect. It was opposed, the Government replying that the Railway Commission had control of rates. That argument is fallacious, and does credit neither to the discernment nor the sincerity of those who advanced it.

The Railway Commission.

It is not the general function of the Railway Commission to reduce rates. What the Commission does, and can be expected to do, is to remove unfair discrimination, and to equalize and standardize rates. That is something very different from granting stated reductions. Rates may be very high, without constituting unfair discrimination.

Speaking in the House of Commons on the Railway Commission during 1903, Mr. Oliver, now Minister of the Interior, said:

"If I understand the general purposes of the Railway Commission, it is that it shall prevent discrimination in rates; that it tends to the equalization of rates, that it shall provide against the conditions which prevail throughout Canada when one town is discriminated against in favor of another, or where certain differences are made by one railway from another. It is not the equalization of rates that we want. It is not equalization that we need. As I said a few moments ago, we need that the rates shall be cut to the bone, that we shall get the lowest ratewhich it is possible to get in order to transact our trade."

Mr. Oliver got at the core of the question.

In Western Canada there have been three notable reductions in freight rates. How were they effected? By the Railway Commission? No; by agreemens between the railway companies and the governments. The first of these was the result of a direct agreement between the Manitoba Government and the Northern Pacific; the second followed, the agreement between the Dominion Government and the Canadian Government respecting the Crow's Nest line; the third resulted from the agreement made between the Manitoba Government and the Canadian Northern.

Opinions of Authorities.

This opinion has been confirmed by the testimony of railway officials themselves. Addressing the Railway Commission in Regina during October, 1909, ex-Judge Phippen, counsel for the Canadian Northern, said:

"We have the fact that owing to special circumstances created by the action of the government of the Province of Manitoba, the rates from the head of the lakes to Winnipeg are lowered to a standard which we would not expect to find if these rates were governed by normal conditions, in so far as they affected that district. And we have this fact—that the rates to the City of Regina have benefitted to the full extent of the reduction brought about by the action of the Province of Manitoba."

Mr. J. A. M. Aikins, solicitor for the C. P. R., speaking on the same occasion said:

"So far as the Canadian Pacific Railway is concerned, the company takes this position, that by virtue of the reductions which were forced upon the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway, and subsequently upon the Canadian Northern Railway, the conditions in Manitoba were such as to make it highly competitive for the Canadian Pacific Railway. The Canadian Pacific Railway was not a party to that agreement, but by virtue of the reduction of tolls through these statutory agreements, the conditions were such that they became highly competitive and the C. P. R. was compelled to meet these competitive conditions."

Premier Scott in 1903.

In 1903, Premier Scott, who was then a member of the House of Commons, was not even satisfied with control of rates by the Railway Commission. During the discussion over the bill guaranteeing the bonds of the main line of the C. N. R., a bill which provided for the control of rates by the Governor-in-Council, or Commission, or any other body constituted for the control of railways, Mr. Scott said:

"There was another suggestion which I consider a very good and essential one, made by the hon. member for East York (Mr. MacLean), that is that there should be put in this contract a provision for maximum rates, so that the people along the lines to be constructed shall know definitely and distinctly what advantage they are to receive in return for what the public is doing for this company."

In other words, Mr. Scott wanted what Manitoba got.

Some months after, another bill was brought before Parliament to bonus the Kirkella branch of the C. P. R. Again the subject of control of rates and maximums rates came up, and Mr. Scott, among other statements, said:

"If it is fair to compel the Canadian Northern to give a contract for maximum rates, then aid to this other company (C.P.R.) should carry with it a similar condition. In this case we should make a contract with the company with regard to the rates to be charged to the people of the district."

The British Columbia Agreement.

British Columbia was the last province to aid the Canadian Northern, which it did through guaranteeing the company's bonds for the sum of $21,000,000 on principal account at 4 per cent. for 30 years. Was British Columbia satisfied with the so-called argument that the Railway Commission has control of rates, and that it was therefore unnecessary for the Provincial Government to stipulate for such control? By no means. British Columbia got control of rates and bound the Canadian Northern to content itself with appealing, in case of dissatisfaction, to the Provincial Supreme Court, thus waiving the right to appeal to the Railway Commission.

The Two Exceptions.

Thus all the provinces that have assisted the Canadian Northern have, with the exception of Saskatchewan and Alberta, secured control of rates. The rates in Manitoba have been much reduced, and in British Columbia they will be kept reasonable through the control which the Government of that Province can exercise. But through the neglect of its government, Saskatchewan—and Alberta also—is paying whatever rates the Canadian Northern has seen fit to impose; and they will continue to do so.

The prairie divisions are the profitable parts of the Canadian Northern system. During the recent election campaign in British Columbia the financial standing of the company was thoroughly discussed, and to prove its stability, the profitable nature of the prairie divisions was particularly emphasized. Discussing this subject, the Victoria Colonist of November 17 said:

"The year ending June 30, 1909, was, as every one knows, an off year on the prairies; yet this railway, which depends chiefly on the prairies for traffic, earned $10,581,767.93, which is $3,450 per mile; its operating expenses were $2,266 per mile; leaving its net earnings at $1,184 per mile."

In a subsequent issue, the Colonist said:

"Nothing can well be more certain than that by the time the British Columbia line is completed, four years hence, the annual surplus from the C. N. R. prairie lines will be at least $8,000,000 or $10,000,000."

High rates and large profits go hand in hand.

As British Columbia and Saskatchewan granted the same amount of assistance to railways, and by the same method, guarantee of bonds, it will be interesting to compare the concessions they received.

It is recalled that British Columbia guaranteed the bonds of the Canadian Northern, which, in that province is known as the Canadian Northern Pacific, for $21,000,000, and interest at 4 per cent. for 30 years. This sum is equal to the amount of the guarantees assumed by Saskatchewan for the Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific Branch Lines Compnay.

But British Columbia got numerous valuable concessions. Saskatchewan according to the standard of the Canadian Northern main line, that the work practically got nothing more than an agreement that the lines would be built would be done within a stated time, and that the companies' property would stand as security.

British Columbia secured control of rates, through and local, for all time; indemnification again all loss; a $500,000 bond from the company in addition to the security of the company's property; an interest in the townsites; an agreement that the company will not pass out of provincial control, besides other concessions of a minor nature.

What Mr. Haultain asked for was: Government control of rates; power for the Government to acquire the lines if it were deemed advisable to do so; power for the Government to decide on the location of the mileage.

Within a year or two the entire Canadian Northern system in this Province, a large part of which is being built on the public credit, will have passed out of the control of the Provincial Government, and all because of the gross negligence of the Scott Government.

The Opposition does not oppose the guaranteeing of rallay bonds, but asks that when bonds are guaranteed the public should receive some concessions for the financial accommodation.

OPPOSITION.

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Many Species of Birds and Beasts are Disappearing.

Almost every year sees the final extinction of one or more animal and birl species. Even in recent years many species have passed into oblivion without so much as the manner of their going being heeded or observed.

The large bounties given by candidates for the favor of the Roman populace in ancient days when wild beasts were pitted against captives or gladiators in the arena of the coliseum assisted in depleting Northern Africa of its larger fauna.

In those days the hippopotamus inhabited lower Egypt, and indeed two were killed by an Italian, Dr. Zeringhi, at Dalmietta, as recently as 1600.

In animal extinction Africa in recent centuries has suffered severely. It has lost the quagg, which was exterminated by about 1865; the bluebuck or blaauwbok), destroyed by the Dutch in the early years of the 19th century, and the white-tailed gnu, which, if it has not entirely vanished is on the very verge of extinction. The miscalled "white" rhinoceros and the South African gemsbok are rapidly approaching a like fate.

When Mauritius was taken possession of by the Dutch in 1598 the dodo was a comparatively common bird. So helpless was this great flightless pigeon, however, a d so useful was it for food for seamen and settlers that in less than a century it had completely vanished. Two other great birds of Mauritius, the flightless rail and the giant coot, also perished utterly in the 17th century.

No specimen of the dodo's near relative, the solitarire of Rodriguez, ever reached Europe. Common at the beginning of the 17th century, they were practically nonexistent by the middle of the 18th. The white doto of Bourbon, first described in 1613, was on the verge of assured extinction 60 years later.

The gigantic aepyornis of Madagascar was still existing, some think, in the 18th century, since one European is stated to have seen it alive in 1745.

The date of the extinction of the moa is still a debatable point, though it is possible that the last members of this huge race were destroyed by the Maori immigrants into New Zealand from three to five centuries ago.

The small black emu of Kangaroo Island, plentiful in 1803, was wiped out in less than a score of years. The New Zealand quail, a common gamebird half a century ago, has been exterminated. The last wild auroch appears to have been killed in Poland in 1627, though degenerate descendants still linger in the parks and reserves of Eastern Europe.

The great auk before 1800 was common even to abundance upon the rocky coasts and islets of the north. By 1825 it had become rare, and 20 years later the last known specimen was wantonly killed.

Whether the animal of which De Flacourt wrote in 1658 was in truth th giant lemur of Madagascar or a form closely allied to it is now impossible to determine; but it is practically certain that this remarkable animal was existing at no enormously remote time.

The Antarctic fur seal—of which it is said that millions were killed by avaricious sealers in 45 years, has ceased to be observed.

In 1741, a noteworthy animal was discovered by Behring on the islands off the coast of Kamchatka. This was an enormous toothless manatee from 20 to 28 feet in length, known as "Steller's rhytina."

Steller, the naturalist, who accompanied the expedition, advocated their use as food for the sailors. His advice was faithfully followed, and so assiduous was the pursuit that by 1768, less than 27 years after their discovery, the last rhytina had been slain, and an interesting species completely blotted out.

Of the tortoises, with which the Mascarene and Seychelles Islands swarmed two centuries ago, few specimens have survived to our times, despite the centenarian age attained by some individuals.

The huge totoises of the Aldabra Islands, so splentiful in former times, are known no longer, save by a solitary species, in their native haunts.

The colossal chelonians of the Galapagos group supplied so delicious and so greatly esteemed a diet that in 20 years the rapacity of the ships' crews made sad and irreparable havoc among them. — Chambers Journal.

Engineer Killed.

Fernie, B. C., April 12.—A wreck resulting fatally to Engineer Ed. Roberts of Engine No. 1348, at 4 o'clock this morning, two miles east of Fernie. Conductor Merron was coming west light and when rounding a curve in the road the engine ran into a rock slide, throwing it into the river, which at that point runs along the railway banks. Roberts had time to set his air brake and throw over his lever, but was caught in his seat and held in what proved to be a death grip by the ponderous engine. The wrecking crew arrived from Cranbrook at 8.45 and the lifeless body of the brave engineer was extracted from beneath the engine one hour later.

The rock slide brought down several tons of rock which completely blocked the road. Fireman Selby, being on the left side of the engine, got through the upper cab window, but had to swim some distance in the river to reach shore.