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DUNCAN MARSHALL,
Manager.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1909.

A DEPOSITION, AN INQUISITION AND A SUBMISSION.

Opposition friends held a convention in Red Deer the other day which seems to have been not altogether devoid of interest—not to say of peculiarities. Just how many were present or where they came from we are not informed by the party press, but their doings are duly advertised as those of the Conservative party, and may be taken as representing the views of at least a section of the party. The holding of a convention in itself, however, must be regarded as a violation of the traditions. That side of the House is supposed to uphold the doctrine that rulers are made to rule, regardless of the wishes or consent, and without interference, from their humble subjects. Where in this is found authority for a number of the subjects to gather themselves together and say what the party should do—even what it intends to do, and to proceed to the deposition of one king and the enthronement of another is puzzling to an outsider, and we fancy will be puzzling likewise to a large section of the rank and file who regard the faithful support of constituted authority as the proper and also the politic course. The wisdom of swapping horses when crossing a stream seems not to have weighed in the minds of the delegates. Nor were they deterred by the fact that a convention for the framing of a party policy was an unintended snub to Mr. Borden, who despite party prayers, protests and petitions has steadfastly refused to call any such gathering and has faithfully asserted in practice the right of the ruler to rule.

Much emphasis is laid on the fact that the resolution inviting another gentleman to assume the provincial leadership was moved by Mr. Robertson, the member for High River, and at present the official head of the party. Just what else could have been expected it would be interesting to know. Mr. Robertson went to the convention knowing well that a leader would be selected or invited. He knew also that the man selected or invited would not be A. T. Robertson. "What could the poor man do?" If he opposed the plan or even failed to show sympathy with it, he would be denied the assistance and recognition of the party in his campaign and no doubt defeated. If he hoped to remain in public life it was up to him to swallow his pride and agree to the proposal. And for him the only way to make agreement seem other than defeat was to make the proposal appear his own. The member for High River apparently thought it better to run a chance, small though it be, of reelection as a follower than to encounter certain defeat as a claimant for the leadership—even though his claims are without question legitimate according to party precedent. Besides, there is the possibility that the honorable gentleman has grown tired of wearing a fruitless crown and wielding a barren sceptre, especially that a considerable portion of his subjects have not been over-respectful to the crown nor obedient to the sceptre.

The remainder of the Opposition in the Legislature was not without its troubles, too. The member for Red Deer it seems had incurred the enmity, or at least the misgivings, of the delegates by his sensible resolution to support the Rutherford government. It was considered desirable therefore to put the honorable gentleman on the rack and search the recesses of his mind and heart to determine what faith was in him and how he intended to govern himself in future. A legal gentleman was deputized inquisitor to wrench from the worthy Don his purposes and motives in giving an interview a few days ago to the Bulletin relative to the course of provincial affairs and his intentions in regard thereto. It was proposed indeed to appoint a tribunal of three to conduct the examination in private and convey their findings to the convention. But the worthy member objected. He stood upon his rights and demanded a trial in open court. His motives, he said, were to get himself elected and to keep the scandal off the political platform in the coming election. However, the former object was regarded the latter was not received with an outburst of approval. He was prepared to support the platform adopted by the convention and considered this an avowal of his intention of supporting the party. That is, he will support the party if the party adheres to the platform.

This was tantamount really to say-

ing that he would support the party if the party supports the Government on all important matters, though the convention did not seem to catch the point. That the point is correct a perusal of the platform as summarized in the party press abundantly demonstrates. It begins with the declaration that to secure railway extension it is expedient to guarantee the bonds of railway companies.

While the Government railway policy has not as yet been definitely declared this has been generally understood to be the course they will pursue. In this the delegates may be assumed with out harshness to have been merely trying to square themselves with the unanimous approval with which the guarantee proposal has been received by the public. How they will square the plank with the declaration of their leader that he intends to represent "Horatius at the bridge" if any attempt is made to encourage railway extension by this means, remains to be shown—though it makes clear enough that if he follows the course of his declared opinions he will have to keep the bridge alone so far as the delegates are concerned.

The remainder of the platform is a curious mixture of good, bad and indifferent proposals. The good ones are in almost every case merely embodiments of the Government's policy or deductions of the natural evolution and development of it. Aside from this there is a tribute to the departed issues of the last campaign; a flimsy proposal which the socialists are expected to mistake for an expression of esteem; an endorsement of Mr. Borden's leadership; and a beautifully vague profession of concern in the laboring man. In a word—the important clauses are borrowed; the original ones are inconsequential. In adopting this the convention unintentionally committed the offence for which they reprimanded the member for Red Deer. After racking him for his contention of supporting the Government they adopted a platform which, when it means anything, means that they wish to accomplish the same ends as the Government and to do it by the same means. The government have little to fear from the Red Deer convention. It amounted in essence to the formal admission of their opponents that their policy is sound, sane and progressive on every essential issue. Their opponents have begun the battle by formal submission.

FATE, KIND AND UNKIND.

Fortune is kind to Mr. M. S. McCarthy, M.P., of Calgary. A protest has been lodged against his return to the House of Commons; therefore he cannot become a candidate in a provincial constituency; therefore he will not accept the honor of provincial leadership. Such at least is the amiable fashion in which he replied to the gentlemen who were kind enough to offer him the crown of Mr. Robertson. The statement of disability is in fact convenient; for to do Mr. McCarthy justice he probably prefers a \$2,500 bird in the hand to a \$1,000 bird in the bush. To a man of financial judgment \$3 per day assured income for four years is preferable to the honor of heading a defeat with \$3 per day as the best that can be hoped for. While so far as glory is concerned a comfortable chair in the House of Commons is not to be hastily vacated for the possibility of leading an attenuated following in the Provincial Assembly, with excellent chances of falling between the stools in trying to make the change.

This, of course, on the assumption that Mr. McCarthy is tolerably certain that he can hold his seat against the protest. Otherwise he probably regrets sincerely the unkind fate which prevents him supplanting the honorable gentleman from High River. For though that gentleman was inveigled into signing his own political death-warrant his title to the honor is without a flaw, considering the traditional mode of attaining chiefdom in the party in Federal affairs. Mr. Robertson is the duly appointed leader and entitled to all the privileges and honor that pertain to the office. To attempt to throw him out of power by any other means than by the votes of elected members of the party in the assembly is rank rebellion. That circumstance constrained him to his own downfall only changes the plot from forcible dethronement to enforced abdication.

THE OPPOSITION ENDORSES THE GOVERNMENT.

The efficiency of a government may be gauged by the alternative proposals of its opponents. The Conservative delegates who met in Red Deer last week did so for the purpose of formulating a platform to submit to the voters of the Province in opposition to the policy of the Rutherford government. It is to be assumed that they framed their proposals with

eyes open for what they considered the weak points of the Government's policy and that they included in their platform all they considered of sufficient importance to be made issues in the coming election campaign. The platform may be taken, therefore, as saying inversely the worst that their enemies can say of the Provincial administration.

It is significant that no clause was included asserting the necessity or propriety of the honest expenditure of public money. Yet on no subject are oppositions generally so prone to base criticism of governments, provided the methods of handling the funds seem to offer opportunity for basing criticism on them. Certainly on no subject have the Conservatives in opposition at Ottawa been more ready in recent years to famine, regardless of proof or evidence circumstantial or other. The omission of such a clause in the Red Deer platform can be taken therefore only as the silent admission of their opponents in the assembly assembled that they have no fault to find with the manner in which the Rutherford government have handled the public money.

This omission is noteworthy in another way. It leaves the Opposition bound by no pledge to maintain the scrupulous honesty in money matters which they admit to have characterized the Government, should the people of Alberta be foolish enough to place them in power. This, of course, is not to be construed as notice to the public that if returned to power they would enter upon a carnival of robery and corruption, but merely that the integrity of the Government was so unquestioned and unquestionable in their minds that they did not consider it necessary to refer to the subject—probably did not even think of it. May we always have governments whose opponents do not even associate with them the idea of faithlessness in this all-important matter.

The first clause asserts the expediency of guaranteeing bonds of railway companies as a means of inducing construction. This having been long ago accepted without denial as the policy of the Government, the clause may be taken as only an attempt on the part of the Opposition to get in with public opinion and to forestall the Government if possible in the definite enunciation of the proposal. In face of the leader's emphatic declaration that he would oppose this policy the plank is an unwilling acknowledgment that the Government struck a note which finds a hearty response in the public sense—simply a note so popular that the Opposition deliberately resorted to its use in order to forestall their leader sooner than follow him into open hostility to it.

The next clause asserts that the Province should administer the public domain. This is a formal tribute to respect to the memory of a departed issue—simply this and nothing more. Whatever reason or pretext may have existed for discussing the terms of autonomy four years ago has ceased to exist. The electors of the province have since expressed their confidence in both Federal and Provincial governments. Nor is there any likelihood of the Opposition trying to make good the word "principle" in the coming contest. As an issue it was a conspicuous failure. As a subject for resurrection it promises even less.

The next plank suggests the adoption of the "principle" of the initiative referendum and recall. The initiative of the word "principle" is notable. It is no wild plunge into novelties that is proposed, but the adoption of the "principle"—not a sufficiently startling proposal to create consternation. The carefully ineffectual nature of the clause reveals its merit. It is not intended as a working maxim but as a well-sounding, nothing-meaning phrase for the capture of a few straggling votes.

The administration of the schools and by the province is next proposed. There is nothing objectionable in this of course provided it is shown that the schools suffer by reason of the present mode of administration, or that they would be bettered by a change. Until this is shown the clause proposes nothing but a change, and a change which does not promise a betterment is not of sufficient importance to arouse public attention or engage the time of a ministry.

It is proposed to guarantee the bonds of municipalities. Very good is the municipalities and school districts want. As yet so far as known they have not asked for it. It will be time to extend relief or assistance when it is asked-for.

The next clause proposes that a plebiscite be taken on the subject of prohibition. Here, too, it will be time enough to act when action is requested. The cause of temperance in the Province is watched and promoted by a very energetic temperance and moral reform league, a body by no

means negligent in noting opportunities for the advancement of the cause or backward in asking for assistance from the law. So far as known the league have not asked for a plebiscite. Presumably they do not consider the time ripe and think that a premature submission of the matter would hamper and delay rather than promote their interests. Until they ask for a plebiscite the proposal to hold one is a reflection on either their judgment or their concern in the matter.

The reforestation of burned timber areas is proposed. On the face of it this means expense, heavy expense, and permanent at expense. It may be possible to accomplish the desired end without incurring the expense. The Federal government have already set aside the largest timber reserve on the North American continent on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. This if properly looked after should ensure an ample supply of timber for all time. The Dominion government having undertaken the matter it is well to let them do as much toward it as they will. When they decline to go further will be time enough for the province to take the question up.

The appointment of a commission to enquire into the possibilities for the development of electrical power involves no radical departure from the Government's policy. The subject came up a few weeks ago in connection with the project to develop power for Edmonton on the Athabasca river and the proposal for a general inquiry was made in these columns. Therefore it has not been endorsed by the opposition, who are the parties directly and solely concerned. When these see fit to ask for investigation it will be up to the Government to move in the matter.

The establishment of an experimental farm is called for. The Province already has two and the establishment of others will follow as the policy of the agricultural department as the necessity arises.

It is proposed to put the telephone system under a commission. This is good or bad according to what is meant by a commission. If this means a manager or managers responsible to the Government and disinterested in the telephone company's interests, all well and good. That is precisely as the system is operated today. But if it is proposed to hand the enterprise over to a body of irresponsible men to be run as caprice, prejudice or self-interest may suggest, the matter is different. This country has not abandoned responsible government yet.

The establishment of an agricultural college is proposed. An agricultural college is now being held at Lacombe, where a short course in practical agriculture is being given at little expense, to farmers who care to attend. In time, of course, a regularly equipped institution will be required and provided. But for the time there are some advantages of no small degree in the "movable college"—or the short courses of instruction given at various points throughout the province. This brings the college to the people instead of making the people come to the college.

It is proposed to continue the coyote bounty; the bounty is being continued. Adequate government hail insurance is declared desirable; the premier declared the same thing in the House two weeks ago and intimated that legislation would be brought down providing for the reorganization of the hail insurance business on a self-sustaining basis. A new election act is proposed; one is now before the legislature for consideration. It is proposed to put the meat packing industry on the same basis as government creameries; the report of the commission inquiring into the matter will be submitted to the House at an early date, accompanied, no doubt by the declaration of policy hinted at by the premier a fortnight ago. Civil service reform is suggested; it will be first necessary to show that and where the service needs reforming.

The government construction of leading highways is approved; merely an embodiment in words of the policy the Government have been pursuing ever since they came into power. The erection of initial elevators by the government is called for; the Government announced some weeks ago their willingness to undertake the problem if the necessary amendments to the provincial charters of the grain-growing provinces could be secured. More land titles offices are requested; an unobjectionable proposal if they are needed and the expense is not too large. It is proposed to amend the Joint Stock Companies act to prevent swindling by promoters; an undoubtedly beneficial end if it can be accomplished, and a measure that would find directly in line with the Government's steadfast endeavor to prevent injustice. Mr. Borden's leadership is

endorsed. Legislation for the adequate protection of labor is called for, a sufficiently vague proposal to arouse no alarm among the capitalists nor to fill the workman with a lively apprehension of benefits to come.

On the whole the important planks of the platform—those which deal with matters of outstanding consequence are good—also they are embodiments of the Government's policy, past, present, forecast or desirable as developments. The remainder of the list comprises an unhappy blending of inconsequentialities which have nothing in common but their impotence. On no single subject of fine importance did the convention find it necessary or wise to disagree radically with the Government. Yet, presumably, they did their best to locate points of divergence. The platform is the carefully weighed views of delegates said to be thoroughly representative of the party as to points on which the Opposition might with benefit to themselves or the province differ with Government testimony to the honesty and efficiency of the administration. The Government could scarcely do better than circulate the Red Deer platform as campaign literature, illustrating just how little fault their opponents are able to find with them.

CURRENT COMMENT.

The people of Peace River want a railway. Why should they not have one?

Hardy Bay may be made the C. P. R. western terminus. Once more Sanford Fleming may be crowned the king of Canadian engineers.

New Ontario is making a name as a stock country. The blind pig is said to thrive particularly well under the considerate treatment of the license department officials.

Ontario newspaper men want the libel laws made more reasonable. There is room for improvement in such legislation generally. A conviction for libel under the existing laws is as often a high compliment to the "offender" as a condemnation; and more often still it is neither. This can hardly be a correct condition of things.

THAT ST. PIERRE DEMONSTRATION.

Police at Back, Such is Statement of French Colonial Minister.

Paris, Feb. 11.—In the chamber of deputies, Colonel Miquel declared the agitation at St. Pierre, Miquelon, had been provoked by certain persons in the public schools of California is an undisciplined class of people sojourning amongst us," and urgently requests the legislature "to set us right before the Japanese and the world on this great question."

SHIPPER WILL NOT PAY SHORTAGES.

Ottawa, Feb. 11.—At the Dominion Marine Association's meeting this afternoon, bills of lading occupied considerable attention, and it was agreed that shippers should refuse to pay more shortage than from 50 to 100 bushels of grain on 100,000.

Both American and Canadian shippers now refuse to be responsible for the large shortages which have been occurring. G. A. Tomlinson, of Duluth, and W. J. Smith, Montreal, represented the American shippers at the meeting.

IMPRISONMENT BETTER THAN LIBERTY.

New York, Feb. 11.—Sick and gaunt, nearly dead from exposure and willing to go back to Sing Sing, two escaped convicts were captured at New Durham, N.Y., by Police Captain Gleason and Roundsman Wallace, of West New York. The prisoners, Paul Kelly and Chas. G. McCarthy, Kelly's condition is critical. The men escaped Tuesday.

Chicago Beef For British Army. London, Feb. 10.—A Chicago firm has been awarded a contract to supply the British army with corned beef for three years. The first delivery, between 500,000 and 1,000,000 pounds, will be made next July and further deliveries will be in accordance with the requirements of the army. The meat will be packed at Chicago under the supervision of British officials.

Grand Trunk Stock Drops.

London, Feb. 12.—The Grand Trunk has declared 2 1/2 per cent. dividend on its second preference stock, carrying forward a large amount. The passing of a full dividend was expected and consequently the stock fell several points today.

Toronto Clerks to Organize.

Toronto, Ont., Feb. 16.—A broadcast call has been sent out amongst the retail clerks of the city to attend a meeting in the Labor Temple Friday evening for the purpose of organizing a Union and Protective Association.

Graters in the B. C. Electric Company.

Vancouver, B. C., Feb. 15.—There has been a big upheaval in the B. C. Electric offices in Victoria. Many suspensions for alleged grafting have been made amongst the high officials.

Kidd Elected in Carleton.

Ottawa, Feb. 16.—Edward Kidd, ex-M.P., carried the Carleton Conservative convention at Stittsville this afternoon by a majority of 16 over W. F. Garland after three ballots had been cast. The voting was Kidd 129, Garland 113, W. B. Arncliffe and George Boyce dropped out. It is unlikely that there will be a Liberal candidate. The vacancy was caused by R. L. Borden electing to sit for Halifax.

Long Service Medals for I.C.R.

Moncton, N.B., Feb. 16.—General Manager D. Pottinger today presented long service medals to twenty-two veterans of the Intercolonial railway service. There were twenty-six presentations scheduled but four of the number were unable to be present. Two of the recipients have each been fifty years in the service. They are Machinists John T. Garty and Foreman Howard Brown.

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MIDDLE WEST IN G
OF STORM OF

Transportation and Telegram
Cities Are Part Out of Co
by Storm—Wind Bl
Miles an Hour—All Tra
One Man Killed, Others

Chicago, Ill., February 17.—A storm of sleet and snow over Chicago and the middle west on Sunday evening means of transportation, local interstate, all but the telegraph service, and serious injury to persons and property. A man was killed at H. Indiana, by a train on the line, while he was being along the tracks through the city and a Chicago number of trains were delayed by heavy sideways. One of the Mattoon, a former county sheriff, was blown from his Michigan avenue and Jackson ward and his skull fractured may die.

Trains All Late. All trains coming into Chicago more or less late, some of the late reported six hours over schedule snow-bound at points north. The wires on some roads, particularly the Chicago Great Western, and between the local officials of these roads no means of knowing where the trains were located. Several elevated and surface railways city was badly retarded by congested rails, and between five o'clock this morning worst period of the storm, the cars and elevated trains were ten minutes to an hour late of the lines.

The railroad companies' telegraph companies' suffer loss by the breaking. For a time it seemed that would be completely shut out world so far as telegraphic communication was concerned, and graph companies and wire of the railroads had to work to maintain any sort of service to a late hour tonight many wires were still out of service were accepted subject to delay.

High Wind Accompanied. In Chicago the storm was by a high wind. A heavy snow prevailed during a portion of the day and there was a continuous snowfall. Steamship transportation the lakes was rendered dangerous by heavy seas, and all steamers, on early Saturday evening headed for the nearest port the storm began to rage.

62 BODIES WASHED ASH

Great Loss of Life in Wreck of Off Cape Terawhiti, N. Zealand.

Wellington, New Zealand, Feb. 17.—Fifty-two bodies have been recovered from the wrecked steamer, the Union Steamship Company, Wellington, which went on to off Cape Terawhiti on the 11th. Six of those who abandoned ship are accounted for. The passengers and crew numbered 100. The ship struck about 10 o'clock at night, but the captain on deck while his vessel deep water and was steering her closer into shore.

The sea was running high and the small boats and rafts were hastily launched, could not stand the waves. Both boats were overturned, but the boats practically sank. The righted themselves again at times. Many acts of heroism were shown by the crew of those struggling in the water. The weaker ones were helped by the stronger. After several hours of the majority of the survivors on the rafts reached the Four boats came ashore but all of them badly crushed.

Heirs to Huge Estate

Hamilton, Ont., Feb. 17.—W. G. Walton is looking for relatives named Page, who on and here and who, with sons, are believed to be in the estate of the late Henry I. Marble Arch, Middlesex, who is said to have been worth \$500,000. The heirs are scattered over the continent and are named Page, residing in Michigan, and in St. Thomas and Bothwell. Mrs. Pope, Mrs. Wesley Elwood, Hattie Elwood, Miss Marsh, Mrs. William Frank and M. Campbell, of Billmore, Sask. also are heirs.

Chief Sources of Crime

London, Feb. 15.—Judge R. has had wide experience in criminal cases, says that crime is the chief source of crime. He said a week's observation at Old Bailey showed three cases tried were of all worst type in their own courts had seen before him. Burglars, Polish thieves and German swindlers. He declared crime was increasing by leaps and among women.

With Feet Shocks For Two

Regina, Feb. 14.—Seven more or less strong, have been rained here throughout the evening. Prof. Alfred the Florence observatory, about to step into a train to was thrown violently to the ground by a severe shock. When picked up, "Be calm, my children, a quake of the fifth degree." It is believed that these we will have them for two years.

Barge Changes Hands

Brooklyn, Feb. 15.—The Upr Carrier Steam barge, Bermuda into the hands of a Brooklyn who is to ply her coming between Chicago and Montreal. She is full well and coal size 234 ft long beam. She is an Ameri