

## WILL GIVE RELIEF TO RAILWAYMEN

Member for Lethbridge Presents Memorial to Legislature in Interest of Railway Employees.

A considerable amount of routine business was put through at yesterday afternoon's session of the Legislature. A number of petitions were presented, several bills were given their second reading before the House in committee of the whole, and an important resolution was brought in by W. C. Simmons, M.P.P., for Lethbridge, whose recent nomination as candidate for the Federal House in the coming elections was received with widespread approval.

His motion, which was the important feature of the session, reads: "Resolved—That a memorial be presented to His Excellency the Governor in Council setting forth the desirability of certain amendments to the Railway Act of Canada providing that before prosecutions be begun against trainmen or other employees of the Railway Companies for negligence causing accidents in the operation of trains or otherwise, 'That provision be made for a proper investigation before a competent



W. C. Simmons, M.P.P., for Lethbridge, who moved the Memorial in Legislature yesterday.

commission or other competent body, with a view of arriving at the cause of the accident before any such prosecutions be begun.

To Benefit Railway Employees. This resolution, which was brought into the House by the energetic representative of Lethbridge district in the Legislature, aims to give relief to a class of the community whose duties are fraught both with responsibility and danger, and who under existing conditions are placed under serious disability.

A brief, eloquent plea for these men was made by the member for Lethbridge in his usual convincing manner, and his remarks evidently commended themselves to the reason and sympathies of the Legislature. The subject is one in which the speaker is perfectly at home, and upon which he can be strongly persuasive, as he has been for some years an ardent advocate of advanced labor legislation. His work in this connection, which is mainly composed of agricultural and industrial communities, has familiarized Mr. Simmons with the needs of both.

Railwaymen are Active. This disability under which railway employees work in Canada, and which Mr. Simmons aims to remove, has been troubling them for some time. At present there is a delegation of responsibility in Ottawa to put the matter before the government there. Already they have had interviews with the Minister of Railways and the Minister of Labor. They have also appealed to Premier Rutherford, asking that his government co-operate with them in their efforts.

Their complaint is that under existing conditions the whole responsibility for accidents is thrown upon the railway employees, and in addition they are liable to criminal prosecution for manslaughter if they are liable to suffer fine and imprisonment under the Railway Act for violating the rules and regulation which railway companies are authorized to make.

Their position as employees places the railwaymen at a disadvantage in relation to the company for the reason that any attempt to place the blame on the company (where it may rightfully belong) will entail the disfavor of higher officials of the company.

It is not long since a deputation of the railwaymen from Cranbrook, B.C., waited on Mr. Simmons, asking his active co-operation in this matter. His forcible presentation of facts for the House's consideration yesterday was the earliest of his progress, then.

Section of Act Referred To. The section of the company's rules and regulations, to which particular reference is made in the speech is as follows:

"Every officer or servant of any company and every person employed by the company, who willfully or negligently violates any law, rule or regulation of the company or its directors lawfully made and in force, or any order or notice of the Minister, or of the Board, or of an inspecting engineer, of which a copy has been delivered to him, or which has been posted up or open to his inspection in some place where his work or his duties, or any of them, are to be performed, if such violation causes injury to any person or to any property, or, although no actual injury occurs, exposes any person or any property to the risk of such injury, or renders such property or property liable to be damaged, shall be liable to be punished as follows:—

such violation, is guilty of an offence, and shall, in the discretion of the Court before which the conviction is had, and according as such Court considers the offence proved to be more or less grave, or the injury or risk of injury to person or property to be more or less great, be punished by fine or imprisonment or both. "No such fine shall exceed four hundred dollars, and no such imprisonment shall exceed the term of five years.

"The Company may, in all cases under this section, pay the costs of the prosecution of every one who, by any unlawful act or by any wilful omission of duty, endangers the safety of any person on a railway, and to sections 307 and 308, and a fine not exceeding \$400, and imprisonment not exceeding five years in regard to section 415 for violation by their employees of rules and by-laws which the Railway Companies had power to make under the Railway Act of Canada. The railway employees had already appointed representatives who were now at Ottawa bringing before the Minister of Railways their claim for redress.

As understood by the mover of the resolution, the railway employees did not want to be exempted from the liability of every citizen to so conduct himself as not to wilfully or negligently cause injury to the life and property of his fellow citizen, but they claimed that in the sections of the Railway Act above referred to, they were specially singled out and subjected to prosecution for acts which it was humanly impossible for them to prevent.

Difficult Duties Theirs. Railway employees were charged with responsibilities requiring unusual skill and watchfulness, and attention to multifarious duties at one and the same time. The Railway Companies, in order to reduce expenditure and increase dividends, were often guilty of imposing too many important duties on one employee.

An engineer often would receive orders at a station before leaving that were a sufficient burden upon the mind of a single person, and yet while carrying these in his memory, he would have the working of his engine, the outlook on the track ahead, the watch for the oncoming train, the conductor or brakeman in the rear, the regulation of the speed of his train and the slightest lapse of memory or inattention in observing any of these might plunge his train to sudden destruction.

Likewise the conductor had the dispatcher's orders, the collecting of fares, and in the case of a mixed train

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himself as most heartily seconding the motion. He was sure, he said, that the House was willing to admit that railway men were a good class of citizens, who to the best of their ability and often under great disadvantages, fulfilled their arduous duties.

They were not asking now and had no desire for special legislation, he continued, but they did request strongly that a certain law as it existed at the present time be not operated in too drastic a manner. It was, the speaker considered, a reasonable request and he hoped it would be viewed in that manner by the Legislature.

Mr. Hiebert rose to remark that in his opinion the resolution would be improved if it were to ask for an amendment of the Criminal Code to relieve these disabilities of railwaymen. He concluded with a request that Attorney-General speak on the subject.

More Petitions Received. On the incorporation of the Harmon agricultural college he located there. W. C. Simmons, of Lethbridge, presented a petition for the incorporation of the Grand Lodge of A. F. & A. M. in Alberta.

Mr. Fletcher Bredin, the member for the Lesser Slave Lake, presented a petition concerning the amendment of the Act incorporating the Alberta and Northwestern railway.

Hon. Mr. Cross rising, stated that he was very heartily in sympathy with the motion which he believed would meet entirely the requirements of the railwaymen in this connection.

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Hon. Mr. Cross presented a petition from the City of Edmonton for an act to validate and confirm certain by-laws of the City of Edmonton.

Hon. Mr. Rutherford brought in a petition asking to incorporate the Mechanics' Literary and Scientific Club. This act will be read a second time on Thursday next.

Several Acts Considered. Hon. Mr. Rutherford asked that a couple of acts down on the order paper for consideration be held over until today, as a couple of members were absent yesterday. Consideration of an act respecting gains and another to grant certain powers to the minister of education was deferred until Wednesday.

An act for expediting the decision of constitutional and other questions introduced by Hon. Mr. Cross, which in its provisions is exactly the same as the Northwest Ordinance referred to in the second reading, and will be read a third time on Thursday next.

For the consideration of several bills introduced by Hon. Mr. Cross, the Speaker withdrawing, and the Deputy-Speaker presiding, the House went into committee of the whole. The Speaker withdrawing, and the Deputy-Speaker presiding, the House went into committee of the whole.

On motion of the Premier the House adjourned until this afternoon at 2 o'clock.

## DREDGING ON GREAT LAKES.

Contracts at Port Arthur and Fort William Explained.

Ottawa, Jan. 22.—In the public accounts committee today W. H. Bennett of Simcoe examined A. W. Bow, chief engineer of the Great Lakes Dredging Co., Ltd., with regard to payment of \$210,353 made to him in connection with dredging work at Port Arthur and Fort William. Bowman stated there had not been an collision with King and Murphy or any other firm as to the putting in of tenders. The company, with which he is connected is known as the Great Lakes Dredging Co. He is a brother-in-law of Charles Bowman, M.L.A., who is president, and James Whalen is secretary. The company was organized in 1905 work at Port Arthur and tendered for, Whalen put in one for the Great Lakes Company, and the second tender was proposed in the office of the minister of public works at the last moment, but the witness laughed at the suggestion. He thought that both were prepared at the Russell House, Ottawa, at the same time. In tendering for the work on Mission river, the company put in a tender for nine cents and the witness one at eighteen cents. With the keen competition he did not expect to get the tender at eighteen.

Mr. Bennett—"Well, the country will not benefit by the competition between you and the Great Lakes Dredging Co. will it?"

Witness—"I hope not." (Laughter.)

Questioned by Mr. Bryce, the witness said that although the tender put in were on the face of them rival tenders, they were really not competitive. If he got the tender he would get the aid of the equipment of the Great Lakes Dredging Company, and there was no general arrangement of a double system of tendering. If the two were put in, it was by special arrangement.

School Teacher Attempts Suicide. Vancouver, Jan. 22.—Arthur Mann, school teacher, Chilliwack, attempted suicide this morning at Stanley park by taking carbolic acid. His groans were heard by passers-by. He will recover.

## OPPOSITION TO CITY EXTENSION

Deputation Wait on Committee of Council to Object to Enlargement of Boundaries.

The committees of the city council held a lengthy session last evening at which several matters of importance were discussed. Among these was the final decision to extend the city limits and the extension of the franchise to married women and tenants. Part of the Yale license fee was refunded. It was also decided that the paving of Jasper, Nanaimo and First street should be proceeded with as the cost of it was already provided for.

When the various committees assembled in the council chamber last evening all the members of the council were present with the exception of Mr. Fraser and George. A number of gentlemen were present to place their views on various matters now under the consideration of the committees, before these committees, and these questions were discussed at some length.

City Limits Extension. When the question of the report of the assessment committee on the extension of the city limits was brought up for discussion Jno. Killen presented a largely signed petition asking that if the city limits be extended, the tax taken in should be exempt from municipal taxation for two years in order to take the city into the G. T. P. property. He urged that the company had to pay large sums of money for the extension of the city limits, and that the city should be exempt from taxation for two years in order to take the city into the G. T. P. property.

Under the agreement of the company with the council the road had been built within three miles of the post office site. The object of the company was to avoid the petty business of passing through the city, the speed of trains, blowing of whistles, ringing of bells, etc., and to avoid the expense of the city in maintaining the road.

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"What the liverymen here want," said Mr. O'Connor, "is to license everybody and make the license the size of the business tax."

Mr. O'Connor also raised the question of the notice of motion, and asked the application to amend the city charter with respect to the framing of a suitable bylaw and license for liverymen.

Would Affix Taxation System. The question of getting an amendment to the charter to allow of an assessment on the floor space and also the imposition of a license fee, Ald. McInnis objected that this would be destroying the single tax system.

Mayor McDougall suggested that the assessment should be \$1 per foot for horses and \$20 per foot for carriages and that a license fee on the number of horses might be imposed to pay for protecting the liverymen in the collection of bills.

Assessment Charges. The next question brought up was the report of the assessment committee regarding changes in the assessment and proposed amendments to the city charter. Some of these were carried with little or no discussion while others the various members of the committee held widely different views, thus leading to considerable controversy.

The first clause discussed was that giving married women the right to vote. The assessment committee proposed that the municipal franchise be extended to give married women the right to vote if they have the necessary property qualifications.

This clause was agreed to by the committee of the whole without discussion.

The next clause provided that churches should have half instead of one acre exempt from taxation and was carried, as was the clause providing that all colleges, schools, hospitals, convents, etc., should have two acres instead of four acres exempt from taxation.

That the council have the power to grant a stated assessment for a term of ten years to manufacturers with the understanding that it would apply to both new and old manufacturing concerns.

The clause providing that a penalty of 5 per cent. be charged on all unpaid taxes on January 1st and an additional tax of 5 per cent. on all unpaid on July 1st was carried without discussion.

No Tax Remissions. That no remission of taxes be allowed was carried after some discussion, and also the clause providing that the city assessor, who is the collector of taxes, should conduct all sales of property within three miles of the post office site.

The clause providing that all appeals from the city assessor should be made to the commissioners instead of to the council, and that 10 days be allowed for final appeal from the commissioners' decision to the council was carried.

Another clause carried provided that the city solicitor should draft a clause whereby the council could secure the better collection of taxes in businesses in case of changes during the year.

When the clause providing that the boundaries should be extended, as stated before, was read, considerable discussion followed, as indicated by the result that it was finally decided that the city boundaries should be extended.

When the clause providing that the extended area of the city should be exempt from taxation for five years was finally carried.

The clause providing that the taxes should be accepted till all arrears were paid was carried without discussion, as was the one providing that the city should be empowered to impose a license fee for the balance of the year on all businesses opening up after the assessment roll is completed.

The Tenants' Franchise. Then came the question of the extension of the franchise to include tenants, and the discussion was a prolonged one. The first clause to be considered was that a householder be defined as the occupant of the same dwelling-house for six months prior to February 1st of any year, which the voters' list is compiled. After discussion this clause was changed to read that a man or woman who lived in a house for a year should not be compelled to live in the same house for six months.

A dwelling house was defined as any house that had two doors in use for ingress and egress. This clause did away with counting the apartments of boarders, lodgers and servants as dwellings. Those persons living in a suite of rooms, however, would be considered as living in a dwelling-house provided they had two doors to their apartments.

Then came the important clause, which provided that all householders, upon the payment of an assessment fee of \$5 before May 1st in each year should be placed on the voters' list. This did away with a franchise to lodgers, employees and servants. The general feeling of the aldermen was that if tenants had a vote they should be taxed. Alderman Manson favored having tenants assessed for the property on which they lived, but this was deemed impractical. While the discussion was in progress City Assessor McInnis read a letter which he had received from J. W. Harrison, D.L.S., assessment commissioner at Vancouver. Mr. Harrison said in part: "If our lists were clear of tenant voters it would be a long time before they would be again included. That is the disturbing element of all voters lists the world over wherever made from the assessment rolls."

When the motion was put that householders be given a vote upon the payment of an assessment of \$5, the motion was carried. More amendments to the assessment were reduced to \$3 and were supported in this by Alderman Manson. The motion carried, however, and the amendment was lost.

Just before the committees adjourned at twelve o'clock Mayor McDougall brought up the question of continuing the paving. He stated that sufficient blocks were already ordered and paid for and were lying at the mill. The motion was carried.

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## ALBERTA'S NEW SEED HOUSE

To meet the Demands of our thousands of customers in Alberta and B.C. we have opened a "SEED HOUSE" in

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Have you seen our handsome new 1908 illustrated seed catalogue? "It's a Beauty." Write for it—a post card will bring it.

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Excellent Stocks

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THIS STORE MAKES FRIENDS through the good old-fashioned plan of honest service. Our Groceries and Provisions are of the best quality obtainable and the price is most reasonable. Best price paid for Butter and Eggs.

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continuing the paving operations this year and the laying of the car tracks on the paved portion of the streets. When it was decided to postpone part of this for another year it was not known that it was provided for. The only question was whether a single or double car line should be laid on Nanaimo avenue.

Alderman Armstrong strongly favored placing a double car