The Colonist.

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THE SPEECH AMENDED

One advantage is enjoyed by a government in preparing the Speech from the Throne, with which a parliamentary session is ended, and it consists in the inability of any one to arise after it is delivered and move to amend it. This is somewhat to be regretted because there are a few things which the Deputy Governor-General might have said in Ottawa on Monday last, that would have added to the interest of the lengthy document read by him. Doubtless it was only because the Speech had already grown to such an unprecedented length that the government failed to add other paragraphs. We shall attempt to supply the deficiency, to some extent. The Deputy Governor-General might have said something to the following effect:

It is the intention of my advisers, if the crops fulfil their present promise, to appeal to the people this fall, and therefore they have prepared a dazzling programme of railway subsidies, which they earnestly hope will so appeal to the imagination of the people that the various political crimes and misdemeanors, of which they have been proved guilty, will be forgotten.

My Finance Minister, who is a very amiable gentleman, who knows about as much about the cost of railways as a horse knows of the binomial theorem, made a trifling blunder of some sixty or seventy millions of dollars in the cost of the government section of the National Transcontinental Railway. But what are a few score of millions any way between friends? You will concede that the larger expenditure affords greater facilities for rewarding the faithful than would be possible under the smaller amount estimated by the Finance Minister.

During the progress of the session an engineer, at one time in the employ of the National Transcontinental Railway Commissioners, made certain grave charges in regard to the over-classification of work on that railway. A special committee was appointed to investigate those charges, and it was shown that there was over-classification, but counsel for the Commissioners and an astute lawyer, who was a member of the committee, having succeeded in badly muddling the chief witness, the committee rose and reported that there was nothing to investigate, which you will recognize as an adroit method of getting out of a bad hole.

A commission, appointed to examine into the workings of the public service, reported to Parliament that there is great laxity and at least a strong suspicion of dishonesty in the way certain of the public departments are conducted, and evidence that the abuse of patronage costs the country hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. Those of you who support my ministers will be pleased to learn that, notwithstanding the urgent demands of the unreasonable people who sit at the left of your Speaker, my ministers have decided to continue this wasteful line of action, whereby the faithful can be secured in those rewards which are their just due.

Certain of my ministers devised a plan whereby they hoped to obtain the control of the preparation of the voters' lists in certain provinces; but the members of your body, who sit on the left of Mr. Speaker in the House of Commons, were unreasonable enough to hinder this plan from being consummated.

You have been kept in session longer than any reasonable person would have supposed was necessary, but this was due wholly to the inexplicable desire upon the part of some of your number to extract information from my ministers, which they did not think it was in the interests of the Liberal party to make known, if they could avoid it; also to the exceedingly persistent manner in which some of your number opposed the plans of my ministers in regard to the control of the voters' lists.

The expenditures which you have voted have been prepared with an eye to the forthcoming election. They are enormous, but my ministers feel that the coming election is their last chance, and they have determined to bribe the people with their own money, and it is obvious that, if they are again sustained, they will be in an exceptionally favorable position, with such large estimates, to reward the faithful.

It is, of course, obvious that, if these paragraphs, or similar ones, had been inserted in the Speech from the Throne, the members would have been too long delayed on a hot afternoon in July, and the departure of the ministers to attend the tercentenary celebrations at Quebec would have been unduly postponed. For these if for no other reasons, it is apparent enough why they were omitted.

800,000,000.

Not people, nor dollars, but bushels of grain. Eight hundred millions of bushels of grain. This is what Mr. George W. Stephens, President of the Harbor Commissioners of Montreal, estimates as the yield of the Canadian West, after one-quarter of her available wheat-growing area has been utilized. Mr. Stephens pleads for the handling of this vast quantity of produce through Canadian ports.

He does not attempt to fix a date when the grain crop will reach this stupendous figure, except to say that it will be during the present century; nor shall we attempt to be more definite than he, but we may point out that, if all goes well, this year's yield will be 120,000,000 bushels of wheat, and that a crop of this magnitude will stimulate immigration into the wheat growing area at such a rate that in a very short time the figures of this year will be doubled. Is it any wonder, then, that we find Mr. Stephens saying:

Transportation, from a Canadian standpoint, would seem to be the most vital problem now requiring attention, for may it not be said that upon its development and efficiency depend the future prestige of Canadian commerce and the integrity of the nation. This fact was recognized by the statesmen who planned and carried to completion the Canadian canal system, linking, by way of the St. Lawrence river, the great lakes to the sea; by the few courageous men who developed and completed the Canadian Pacific railway; and again, by those associated with the construction of the Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific systems.

As Mr. Stephens says, within a few years Canada will have three transcontinental railways across her own territory, and we may add another route to the markets of the world by way of Hudson's Bay; but these will not be adequate to the moving of the immense crop which the country can produce. It is to be remembered in this connection that a very considerable portion of the grain crop will be shipped from the Pacific coast, especially after the completion of the Panama Canal. The improvements in the grade of the Canadian Pacific now being made will greatly facilitate the handling of west-bound freight; the grades of the Grand Trunk Pacific have been selected with special reference to the demands of west-bound traffic, and we may rest assured that the Canadian Northern will be located with the same object in view. Therefore, in considering the transportation problem, it is not necessary to look upon it as something which even principally concerns the Atlantic seaboard. We do not say this to depreciate in any way the claims made on behalf of Montreal, but only mention it as a contribution to the discussion of the most interesting and important question which the people of Canada will have to consider in the immediate future.

THE CANADIAN NORTHERN

The people of Victoria have always had a very kindly feeling for the Canadian Northern Railway Company. Doubtless this is due chiefly to the fact that they have been led to look upon that company as likely to afford them that connection with the Mainland that they feel is needed for the full development of the commercial interests of their city. At one time it seemed probable that we would have to depend upon it for the opening of Vancouver Island. Those who knew Messrs. Mackenzie and Mann were well aware that they appreciated in a very high degree the value of the resources of this Island and the strategical advantages of its ports. By acquiring the Esquimalt & Nanaimo railway and engaging in a policy of extension, the Canadian Pacific has occupied to a certain extent the field to which it has been supposed the Canadian Northern was looking; but this has not really lessened the interest which Victorians take in the very remarkable company of which Mr. William Mackenzie is the head, with Mr. D. D. Mann as a capable lieutenant. For these reasons, Colonist readers will be interested to learn that this company has received some very substantial assistance from the Dominion Parliament. The following despatch to the Montreal Star gives the particulars:

The Minister of Railways has given notice of a resolution providing for a guarantee of the bonds, debentures and other securities of the Canadian Northern railway to the extent of thirteen thousand dollars per mile on the construction of several new lines in the West, as follows:

1. A line of railway from or near Regina, in Saskatchewan, to the westerly boundary of Manitoba, there connecting with the company's line to Brandon, not exceeding 152 miles.

2. A line of railway from or near Saskatoon, in Saskatchewan, thence running in a southerly and westerly direction towards Calgary, not exceeding 175 miles.

3. A line of railway from or near Prince Albert, in Saskatchewan, by way of North Battleford and Battleford Junction to or near to Battleford, excluding, however, the mileage between North Battleford and Battleford Junction, the distance exclusive of the last mentioned mileage not exceeding 132 miles.

4. A line of railway from the Thunder Hill line of the company's railway at or near the westerly boundary of Manitoba, running in a generally western direction towards Rosthern, a distance not exceeding 132 miles.

5. An extension of the Rossburn line from the western boundary of Manitoba, in a northwesterly direction, a distance not exceeding 50 miles.

Another resolution provides for a guarantee of the extent of $13,000 a mile for the first fifty miles of the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific railway, and of $25,000 a mile for the additional remainder of the line.

The resolution provides that interest on the securities will be paid at the rate of 13½ per cent per annum. The securities will be guaranteed by one or more deeds of trust which shall create a mortgage or charge upon all the lines of the railway now in operation. The part of this arrangement having special interest to the people of Victoria and British Columbia generally is the paragraph preceding the last. The Edmonton, Yukon & Pacific Railway Company was originally the Edmonton District Railway Company, but in 1899 its name was altered to what it is at present, and it was authorized to build a railway either to the Yellow Head Pass or to the Pine River Pass, and thence by such route as is found or is deemed most practicable to a port of British Columbia. Subsequently the company was authorized to transfer its franchise to the Canadian Northern. The powers of the company as to its western terminus are therefore wide, and it needs no additional legislative authority to construct to Victoria or any other point, which it may select. The guarantee applies to any route through the province by which it may build.

THE SESSION.

The Speech from the Throne as delivered on Monday was like the session it closed, exceedingly long. Usually His Majesty's representative has to be content with uttering a few platitudes; the Deputy Governor General was given a campaign document to read. It was a clever piece of electioneering. The whole country had grown heartily sick of the session, was satisfied that it had been chiefly a useless waste of time and marked especially by the disclosure of a miscellaneous lot of scandals. It was brought to a close by the reading of a document, which tells the people of Canada that it was a really valuable session and how thoroughly in accord with public sentiment and the needs of the country the work of Parliament has been. All of which seems to demonstrate that it is a good thing to have the dealing of the cards come round to you occasionally, and that the hand of Sir Wilfrid Laurier has not lost its cunning to any great extent. The Conservative party may make up their minds that, if they are going to win at the elections, they will have to put up the liveliest kind of a campaign.

There has been considerable legislation of value placed upon the Statute Book during the long months in which Parliament was in session, and it is to be noted that with the principle of all, or nearly all, the several measures there was complete accord among the members. Differences of opinion arose on details, and sometimes the view of the Opposition members prevailed. Even on the question of the All-Red Route there was no vital difference between the parties. There is an important lesson in this fact, and it is that there is as a rule unanimity among the people of Canada upon all the great principles to which effect ought to be given, if the country is to be prosperous and the necessary development secured. The Conservatives do not oppose such well-considered measures as the Liberals propose either for the advancement of the material interests of the country or the betterment of the administration of public affairs. Certain things must be done in a great and growing country like Canada, and the only open questions in regard to them are as to the time and manner in which they should be done. These are points upon which there may reasonably be divergencies of view, but they are rarely so wide that political issues can be made out of them. This leaves the people free to deal with the administration of affairs, knowing that anything that is really needed for the development of the country will be done, no matter what party happens to be in office. Thus we saw the Liberals, when in opposition, severely criticizing the expenditures of the Conservatives to open the Dominion with railways, and we have seen them in power going far beyond anything which the most extravagant member of the Conservative party ever suggested. If they answer this by saying that the country demands more now than it did ten years ago, we need only reply that this proves just what we have been saying, and it is the only demonstration that can be asked as to the readiness of the Conservatives, when they come into power, to continue a policy of development. We are enjoying such a policy at present, not because the Liberal party has given it to us, but because the needs of the country and an irresistible public opinion demand it.

These things being so, the people of Canada may at the forthcoming elections very properly address themselves to the matters involved in the details of administration. It is not sufficient to have a progressive policy, for a progressive policy may cast undue burdens for the time being upon the people. It is not sufficient to have great undertakings entered upon for great undertakings may be so carried out as to cost the country enormously in excess of what they should. It is not sufficient to make liberal appropriations for the public service, for we have seen that such appropriations may be misspent recklessly. We will always, let us hope, have a progressive policy; we will always have great public undertakings; we must always have liberal appropriations for the public service. But we ought always to have wisdom in shaping that policy, economy in carrying out those undertakings, honesty in expending those appropriations. The great lesson of the past session is that Canada has not had this wisdom, economy and honesty; but that on the contrary policies have been ill-considered, and public expenditures have been carried on wastefully and not always with a regard to the dictates of ordinary honesty. If the Liberals shall claim that they have had a progressive policy, the Conservatives can answer with perfect truth that this policy has been unbusiness-like, wasteful and in too many instances corrupt.

This issue thus raised is a very serious one. The attention of the people of Canada ought to be concentrated upon it. Every true Canadian has a duty to himself and his country to perform under such circumstances. It is to do his share towards purifying the administration of affairs. This is an issue of supreme importance. If a stop is not put to the method in which the affairs of the country have been carried on, the end will be serious, for the credit of Canada will be destroyed and the sentiment of the people will be corrupted. Such an issue is greater than any question of policy can be, for upon the manner in which the people of Canada shall pronounce upon it depends the success of all policies.

The way Mr. Bryan is growing as a presidential possibility in the eyes of the people of the United States is one of the most remarkable phases of the contest on the other side of the line.

Dredging operations are being carried on in the Yukon this season on an unprecedented scale and it is reported that there is every indication that the returns will be large. This is an excellent piece of news.

The House of Lords has passed the Old Age Pensions' Bill. There are some critics of the situation who are unkind enough to suggest that this is exactly what the Asquith government hoped the Lords would not do.

We can't all be at Quebec at the tercentenary celebration, but, as loyal Canadians, we are there in spirit, joining with our fellow-countrymen in their expressions of loyalty to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

Great Britain has made a magnificent showing in the Olympic contests. Next to victories by our own athletes, this is the most gratifying result possible in the eyes of Canadians. The most of the prizes and honors are to be kept in the Imperial family, anyway.

Nelson finds itself in the position of being compelled to double the capacity of its light and power plant. This is a very healthy sign. A bylaw will shortly be submitted to the people, and will pass. In matters of civic progress the people of Nelson pull together.

There is loud complaint about the obsolete character of some of the street cars at present in use in the city. We feel sure that the company will remedy the matter at the earliest possible date. Victoria simply expanded more rapidly than the B. C. Electric Railway Company had any notion that it would, and now it is experiencing a little difficulty in catching up with it.

During Mr. McBride's recent tour on the Mainland, the party inspected the stupendous piece of work being undertaken by the C.P.R. in Kicking Horse Canyon, where immense tunnels are being driven through solid rock to lower the grades and avoid excessive curves. The ministers were particularly glad to note that none but white labor was being employed. Their satisfaction in this respect will be shared by the country at large. This incident in no small measure serves as a vindication of the present provincial government's immigration policy.

Thus far the great tercentenary celebration at Quebec seems, in point of success, to have exceeded the fondest expectations. We will all hope that it may be brought to a happy close without any untoward incident occurring.

Among the last batch of knights created by His Majesty we note the name of Sir Thomas Palmer Whittaker, whose claim to distinction rests principally upon the fact that he is a great temperance reformer. Verily, the times are changing.

"So far as I am concerned I wish to state this: 'When it comes to surrendering my rights as a free American citizen and violating the injunction of the courts, I do not hesitate to say that I shall exercise my rights as between the two.'"—Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor. Such an utterance from one representing millions of the working classes is of grave significance.

Mr. Black, manager of the Ogilvie Milling Co., in an interview at Winnipeg, is quoted as saying: "This promises to be one of the most successful years in the history of the Canadian west, and should have a marked effect on the country's prosperity." A sentence like that, uttered by one so competent to express an authoritative opinion, looks good in print.

A London dispatch says that there is a growing disposition in Britain to resent the manner in which Japan is forcing British commerce out of Korea and Manchuria, and that unfriendliness between the people of the two countries is likely to be the result. A rapprochement between the United Kingdom and the United States on Oriental questions is finding favor.

The Ottawa Free Press says that Major Hodgins made a mistake, and it adds: "This mistake originated in a misapprehension, which seemed to be so supported by contingent circumstances that it became deepened into conviction." This is a very fine sentence. There does not appear to be anything else to say. But what a pity it is that the committee did not so report! Its finding would then have become a parliamentary classic.

We are not disposed to believe that any special significance attaches to the approaching visit to the coast of Mr. William Whyte, second vice-president of the C.P.R., and party. Developments in transportation plans are always in hand by the great Canadian corporation, and therefore it is but natural to suppose that Mr. Whyte may have an eye to other matters than his health when he visits Prince Rupert and Skagway; but the C.P.R. has a habit of not proclaiming from the house-tops what its intentions are.

It is twelve years since the Laurier ministry came into power, and during that time seven of those who held office in it have died. They are Sir Oliver Mowat and Messrs. Blair, Tarte, Mills, Dobell, Prefontaine and Sutherland. Six years ago not many persons would have supposed that Sir Wilfrid himself would have survived these gentlemen, but not only has he done so, but he is to all appearance in vigorous health and just as full of fight as ever. May he live long to enjoy in retirement the regard of his tens of thousands of friends, who are not all by any means his political supporters.

The long lists of hotel arrivals which we are publishing each day show that there are an immense number of visitors in the city at present. In this connection it ought not to be forgotten that the percentage of transient visitors who register at hotels is small, and therefore there is little doubt that the aggregate tourist travel this season will break all records. Supporting this belief is the fact that lists of registrations at the museum and the rooms of the Tourist association are very large. Then, again, all vehicles plying for hire to sightseers are busy; the storekeepers report trade excellent, and seldom have the streets been so thronged. In short, the prosperity of the community is patent to all.

In Mr. A. S. Goodeve, of Rossland, the Conservatives of Kootenay have chosen a gentleman as their candidate for the approaching federal elections who even his opponents concede to be one of the strongest men in the country, speaking in a political sense. He has had considerable previous experience in public life, is exceptionally well-informed on all matters engaging the attention of the country and is one of the best platform speakers in Western Canada. We regard his election as a foregone conclusion. The Conservative party of this province is indeed fortunate in having succeeded in inducing two such strong men as Martin Burrell and A. S. Goodeve to enter the fighting lines in the important constituencies of Yale-Cariboo and Kootenay.

Exclusive of the amount provided for the National Transcontinental Railway, the expenditures of the government of Canada this year will amount to about $100,000,000; that is, if there is time to spend the money before the end of the fiscal year, which is doubtful. Of course a great deal of this vast outlay is necessary, but a very large amount of it is for purposes which are not of such importance that the interests of the country would have materially suffered, if their accomplishment had been postponed. This observation applies especially to public buildings, for the erection of which a regular mania seems to have set in. First one little town and then another asks for a public building, and when one gets it, to refuse another is nearly impossible. This is a line of expenditure upon which a halt might be advantageously called.

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