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DUNCAN MARSHALL, Manager.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1909.

THE EIGHT HOUR MINING DAY.

Coal mines in Alberta are operated under the "eight hour bank to bank" law passed by the provincial legislature last year. Under this day's work in a mine consists of eight hours, calculated from the time the miner enters the mine until he leaves it again. The time spent in going from the entrance to the place where he is to work and in returning thither is counted as part of his working day.

Previous to the passing of the act there was no limit whatever upon the length of the day. This was determined by agreement between the operator and his men, and varied as between different mines and different parts of the province. The strength and aggressiveness of the miner's organizations, the disposition of the operator, the condition of the trade, all were factors in determining what should constitute a day's work in any particular mine; and as the causes differed so did the results.

Generally, however, this lack of legal limit made for a long rather than a moderate length of day. The operator who might be disposed from principle or policy toward a short day was confronted by the fact that his competitors who thought differently were free to work their men nine, ten or as many hours as they could be persuaded to work, and thus compete with him at an advantage. The miners were in position to enforce their demands for a short day were confronted with the circumstance that they might put themselves out of occupation by forcing their employer to compete at a disadvantage with others whose men worked longer hours.

From this condition came the "eight hour bank to bank" law. It is founded on the assumption that it is in the general interest to have a fixed and moderately short day worked in the coal mines of the province. Eight hours was decided upon as long enough for any man to stand underground, shut in from the earth and air and engaged at the hardest kind of hard work. That it is class legislation is true; but it is based on a proper appreciation of the right of the individual who happens to earn his living by mining coal. That it is radical legislation may be true, but it is in thorough accord with the trend of modern legislation affecting industrial conditions, and is radical only because while in other countries it came after a long process of legislative evolution it was here introduced, at a comparatively early stage of industrial development.

The principle of the act is safeguarded from invasion by both directions. Alike the operator and the miner are bound to respect it. The former is not allowed to work more than eight hours per day; and the men are not allowed to work a longer day than this. The measure is compulsory to all concerned. It was made so because it embodies a principle which it is believed desirable to establish beyond interference, and because it could be secured from interference only by being protected on all sides. This principle is that men shall not be compelled nor allowed to spend more than eight hours per day underground in Alberta.

Like most other legislation the new act was not without opposition, nor has the opposition entirely ceased. It comes from the mine-operators, though why has not yet been made clear to the public. If the act placed one operator under restraint as to the length of day but left his competitors free, or if it bound the operators in one section of the province, but not those of other sections, there would be understandable ground for strong objection on the part of the man or the group of men who were discriminated against. But it does nothing of the kind. It places all under the same regulation. To the operator willing to establish the moderate day the law is assurance that his doing so does not place him under any disadvantage as against his competitor unwilling to do so. It is only to the operator who wants to work longer than eight hours that the act acts as a handicap; and to him only because it prevents him securing by hardness an unfair advantage over his more humane competitor.

dig does coal in eight hours than in nine or ten, does the burden of this supposed decrease in production fall on the operator? Assuredly not. The coal operator bears no part of the expense of operating his mine—if he runs his mine on business lines. He charges up the cost of operation against the price of coal, adds his profit to it, and fixes his price accordingly. The consumer is the man who pays the shot. If, therefore, there is any kick coming it is coming from the consumer and not from the operator. But the consumer has raised no objection and is likely to raise none. However desirous the people are to buy cheaply they do not carry the desire to the extent of demanding that other men be forced to work and live under unduly depressing and improper conditions. And they are thoroughly convinced that more than eight hours per day underground is an unduly depressing and improper condition of life.

But it will take some strong proof to establish that the miner produces less coal under the eight hour bank to bank law than he did under the previous one-hour-day law worked here. It is a reasonable proposition that a contented man working eight hours per day will do more work and do it more satisfactorily to his employer than a discontented man forced against his will to work nine or ten hours. This rule has been proved a thousand times to hold good in other lines of occupation and must be considered to hold good in coal mining, too, until proven otherwise. Until this is done the public will accept it as proven that the eight hour day has not reduced the output from the mine; and that therefore, while he has lost by the change, nobody the miner and his family have been inestimably benefited.

THE EJECTION. Mr. W. H. Maclean, M.P., has been lately read out of the Opposition, the whip having declined to nominate him as member of a single standing committee. Mr. Maclean's name was, however, added to the membership of the five committees on which he served last year on motion of Sir Wilfrid Laurier—the same Sir Wilfrid whom the Opposition journals portray as the arch-enemy of political independence.

The ejection of Mr. Maclean marks another triumph in peculiarity for the strategy which surrounded Mr. Maclean. With all his vigorous member for South York is worth to any party all the George Taylors that could be packed into the House of Commons.

In this connection it is interesting to perhaps instructive to observe that Mr. Maclean has been attacking the proposed melon-cutting bill of the C. P. R. This proposal, which has been referred to already in these columns, is to hand 50 million dollars worth of stock to the shareholders at par, instead of selling half the amount in the open market for an equal amount of money. Mr. Maclean with many others is of the opinion that this is a measure of public right and has had the temerity to say so through his paper, now the platform and in the House. Now the question arises—was Mr. Maclean kicked out of the Opposition by the Taylor-Haggart crowd because he raised the voice of protest against their projected outrage of their members? If so he should congratulate himself. It is creditable to be "not wanted" by some people.

A CANADIAN MINING REPORT.

A report has been issued by the department of mines, Ottawa, to meet the increasing demand for information on the mining and metallurgical industries of Canada, not only from points in the Dominion, but from all parts of the world. The work comprises 936 pages of text, descriptive of all the metallic and non-metallic mineral mines; and metallurgical and clay industries in the Dominion, from the Atlantic to the Pacific; illustrated by some 114 engravings and drawings, and mineral maps of the respective provinces. The maps alone render the report a valuable acquisition to the desk of every business man in the country; since not alone are they up-to-date as regards the topography of Canada, but the location of known metallic ore and commercial mineral deposits, being worked, are marked thereon.

A brief historical sketch prefaces the industrial review of each province, and a description of the magnitude, equipment and mode of operation of every important mine and plant mentioned is given; together with the capitalization and personnel of each organization or company. In the copious index some 1,500 names of owners or companies are recorded alphabetically. While the report is chiefly of the mining and metallurgical industries of the Dominion, it differs from all such hitherto published on the American continent in the fact that it is not a mere inventory, but has attractive features, interesting to everyone engaged in trade and commerce, and-seeing for the industries of progress of Canada; since, in addition, to the specification of the many mines and industrial concerns, it contains valuable historical notes, essential geographical monographs, analyses of materials, descriptions of equipment and reliable statistical tables. Every business man desirous of knowing the extent, magnitude and importance of the mining and metallurgical industries of Canada should possess a copy of this valuable report just issued by the Dominion government at a time when the country is on the threshold of great industrial development.

THE GRAIN CONFERENCE.

Great good must come from the grain conference at Calgary. Aside altogether from its purpose, the fact that the conference was held with general benefit. The gathering was attended by farmers, buyers and railway men, the three parties most directly concerned in the grain trade. Views were fully exchanged between them and a better understanding arrived at all round. To some degree it may be expected to mitigate the hostility which has been a pretty common characteristic of each toward the other, and to introduce a sense of mutual interests. The interests of the producer, the carrier and the buyer are not essentially antagonistic but complementary and if the elevator owners and the railway men are brought to exhibit a more considerate spirit toward the first and most important party in the business, the conference will have simply made good.

As was to be expected, some of the most valuable information received during the Pacific route came from Mr. Price, representing the C. P. R. He summarized the possibilities of the route by saying that with the same number of cars, the company could haul two cars of Alberta grain to the coast for every car they haul east, owing to the shorter distance.

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A C. P. R. official informed the grain conference that the C. P. R. had increased its crop-handling capacity 153 per cent. in the year. This only shows the hopelessness of one railway doing the business, however enterprising it may be.

The Mail and Empire is outraged that Wm. Sloan, of Comox-Altova, should have resigned to make way for Hon. Wm. Templeman, forgetting that four years ago Mr. Kidd, of Carleton, resigned to leave a vacant seat for Mr. R. L. Borden.

Calgary Herald—"If A. J. Robertson really did tell an Alberta reporter that 'Tory bosses' were plotting against him, Mr. Robertson is that fool'shead demonstrated his inability as a leader." The leader, of course, should not blurt out the truth in this inconsiderate fashion.

As expected, the year is to be one of heavy civic expenditure. This could not be avoided if Edmonton is to keep on growing, and that it will keep on growing nobody doubts. The point to be kept in mind is to get a dollar's worth of work or material for every dollar spent. Nothing is cheaper than money well spent.

Mr. A. J. Robertson has denied that he told the Alberta press that the powers of his party were plotting against him. It will now be up to the Calgary Herald to assure the public and the party that Mr. Robertson has not dissipated the faith of the people in a qualified himself for leadership by using the alleged language.

California's legislature has passed an act forbidding Japanese children to attend the common schools. The governor in consideration of international relations, has vetoed the measure. State sovereignty seems to be about as compatible with national authority as free-love with the marriage vows.

The indeterminate sentence has been introduced in Great Britain by an act passed at the recent session of parliament. This system enables the authorities to release a prisoner whenever his moral improvement may warrant it, or to keep him in durance indefinitely if he appears incorrigible. The latter half of the proposition looks good anyway.

By the following fact probably there is to force grain to go east will not more mean a "dead sure thing" than the C. P. R. would make more money; therefore the C. P. R. graciously consents to allow it to go westward. At present all that goes west must go by the C. P. R.; wherefore the C. P. R. will use their influence to send as much west as possible.

In this lies the chief hope of the development of the western route. The introduction of competition from the east has enlisted the interests of the C. P. R. in "booming" it. Without the C. P. R.'s assistance the route could not be made practicable—witness the success of their blockading policy for twenty years.

CURRENT COMMENT.

The bounty for the destruction of coyotes is to be renewed. Last year the plan was so effective that the bounties exceeded the appropriation.

Twenty-three cases are down for hearing by the Railway Commission in Edmonton. The Commissioners will not have much leisure for viewing the sights.

From the tone of anti-British pamphlets, the brand of education applied by Indian universities seems to be exclusively designed to the cultivation of the imagination.

The "Americans" are a great people also well beyond others. When they want to see a real foot race they charter an Englishman to run against a Canadian Indian.

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for the proprietors is sometimes meted out there in the flaming pages of youth. So far, however, nothing more damaging than uncomplimentary phrases of a personal nature have been utilized as missiles. But with this tempting instance of physical violence having secured relief from prolonged non-payment, who knows but that ink pots and reference books will be considered fair ammunition in future? A couple of months' hence, when the leaves are opening and the birds singing it may be necessary to aaidation a body of inanity in the corridors to keep the venerable boys from macking each other's eyes, or, earlier method—to porragos and let them expand the surplus enthusiasm between the plow handles.

Two Ontario lunatics who shot men have been found of British birth, one English, the other Scotch. Which is thought sufficient justification by the Toronto News to assail the whole immigration policy of the Dominion as criminally negligent, if not positively designed to import mental weakness generally or exclusively. Curiously enough the News admits that "No one will attempt to advise that a certificate of good morals and physical vigor can be denied of every 'would-be immigrant who sets foot upon a steamer bound for Canada.' But unless this is what the News argues for it has been strangely unfortunate in expressing itself. As usual the Ontario taxpayer is invited to consider himself aggrieved at the expense thrown upon him by the necessity of supporting these men in asylums. But he is not reminded that the mortgage on his farm has been paid off by the general prosperity of the past ten years—prosperity in the larger part induced by the peopling of our vacant lands with men who are neither mental nor physical fits and who were induced to come to Canada by the "incompetent system of boused immigration" the News so roundly condemns. Neither is he reminded that these two unfortunates would have been promptly deported without expense to him if he had asked for it.

In England there is a league for the detection and punishment of private "graft." In a recent issue the London Times gives a list of convictions due to its efforts.

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The Austrian parliament has been prorogued, it being found impossible to keep the members from punishing each other's heads. Here may be a hint for shortening the interminable sessions at Ottawa. It is unlikely the means will be adopted in the House of Commons, however. There traditions are revered and conventionalities reign supreme. In the senate of course things are different. Regard

THE BEST SPREADS.

Calgary Herald—"The leader of the opposition complains that the Conservatives at Calgary are attempting to sow dissension among his own followers in Nanton and prevent him from getting the nomination in his own riding. If the Calgary Tories succeed, everything will be in a deplorable mix up. We have known parties without leaders. We have known parties with leaders, who have followed; but the object aimed at by the troublesome Calgary Tories is to have a sad combination of party without a leader and leader without a party.

The troufars have gone beyond ordinary revolt and are plotting against the political life of the leader. This is foul murder indeed. The Albertan is loath to give advice to the Tory mutineers and does not flatter itself that the advice would be accepted, but it dares to suggest that they should have patience, let the leader get the nomination and Nanton will do the rest and see that Mr. Robertson is removed from the political warfare is due form with drums reversed and all the other paraphernalia necessary to a respectable, high-class funeral.

PUBLIC AUCTION.

THOMAS MULLIGAN. Who is moving to B.C. soon. I am authorized to sell on THURSDAY, FEB. 25TH, 1909 Beginning at 11 a.m. at above mentioned place, near Bon Accord P.O., Sec. 12-26-24 the following described property, to-wit: Horse—Bay gelding, 8 years old, 1100 lbs.; gelding, 6 year old, 1050 lbs.

FRANK WEBBER C. H. WEBBER. Auctioneer.

Raymond, Feb. 7.—Two boys at Raymond, who stole some horses on Wednesday night, and left town, are supposed to have crossed the boundary. The mounted police are on their tracks.

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HIGHLY ATTRACTIVE AUCTION SALE

Messrs WALKER & FRASER will sell for Mr. Geo. W. Davies, AGRICOLA, one of the first settlers in the district at S. W. 1/4 16-54-32 W. 4th, 3 miles south of Fort Saskatchewan. Tuesday, March 2nd 1909 at 10 a. m. sharp (Free Lunch at noon) one of the finest lists of Farm Stock and Implements ever offered by Auction in the district.

19 First Class Horses, 29 First Class Cattle, 11 First Class Hogs, full outfit of Implements, full outfit Horse Furnishings, etc., etc. See posters for full details. EVERYTHING GOOD. RESERVE THE DATE. WALKER & FRASER, Auctioneers FORT SASKATCHEWAN

BRITISH POLITICS IN WILDLY CHAOTIC STAGE

Liberals and Unionists Fighting Formerly-Targeted Funds Development—Free Trade Unionists, the Protectionists in Their Own Way—War on Lords Continues.

London, Feb. 8.—This has been a busy yet futile and contradictory day on the continent and at home. It began abroad with a threat of invasion, but peace now seems assured. Bulgaria must yield to the pressure of all the powers, including even its friend as Russia, and demobilize troops. The last move of Bulgaria really done good in that it has put up the powers by making the perils of prolongation of the present situation more obvious, and although via and Montenegro are still in the chances for a peaceful solution of Balkan affairs, it is more probable than at any time since the outbreak. At home the furious war between the various sections of the Unionist party, the split in the ranks, the beginning of the week it seems if the aggressiveness of the protectionists is overruled, a realignment in favor of the free trade Unionist party. Several free traders found the courage to defy protectionists, notably Lord Roberts. Three others followed his courage and even protectionists were rebuffed the protectionists and sought to bring about a truce or a compromise.

The amusing feature from the standpoint is the pique of the Unionists over the split in the British Unionist ranks. The English reformers are indifferent to a cause, but the Morning Post attempts to take the part of the Irish Unionists on home rule in exchange of Irish support of tariff reform.

The Spectator, the leading free trade Unionist organ, is in despair over the rule, and the Morning Post, edited by Cecil for flirting with home rule, although the fine Irish nationalists in favor of the free trade Unionists, it ends with a successful result on their part, the Irish nationalists meeting with their constituents broken up by tariff reformers, and light goes on fast and furious in an end in a hoped-for independent union of the Unionists at the next election, or it will result in the adoption of the Morning Post's policy. The Unionist party as a whole. Either of these policies will prevent all chances of Unionist winning at the next election.

Much still depends upon Balfour. He is attracted to the idea of a hesitancy while this territory is going on inside his party. He plans to give a party, and from and spinners. Every one would ultimately yield to the tariff form, as it now is favored by the party of which many have broken away after his years of hesitancy, take a final plunge into the protection camp.

Such a situation offers a splendid chance to the Liberals; but they wise are divided and disconcerted. Internal differences, not as to principle but as to tactics, the old dispute of the Liberal Unionists and the House of Lords. It is a section which wants an immediate assault and the section which wants postpone the fine rights and election for two years, or until government has completed a complete program. The complicated situation complicated still more by the coming demands of the different sections of the Liberal Unionists. They on to revolt unless the Welsh card disestablishment measure is carried. This comes at a season when the of the Liberal party regards the change of a measure which the House Lords will reject as a waste of strength and prestige.

Hard Fight Over Budget. Lloyd George's budget, rather alarmed over the outbreak of the financial section against his mission speech, his downward in the prices of the coal and the other gilt edged English securities are helping the large class capitalists who are his and the criminally most bitter enemies. The Liberal party is in a predicament, it may be forced on all parts though that is unlikely.

In Ireland the whole country is absorbed in the discussion of Birrell land bill and the coming convention, where its fate will be decided. The Lords and O'Brien thunder against the measure, but Freeman's Journal backs Rodin and the overwhelming majority of the Irish party in defence of the measure and delegates favorable to its adoption continue to be elected in every part of the island.

The peril is not absent of an attempt to bring up the convention by an untimely organized discreditable view of discrediting the bill and Irish party. Such an attempt will nullify the decision of the convention, certain for the bill, though perhaps will be reached only after a long session.

Churchill Wakes Political Life. Winston Churchill has the truest and most power of always making a real situation interesting. When he has got to the dogs of home in the House of Commons and even body of his own party, he has not said, and that even an arch-foe could not bring back life to the dying cause. Churchill has only to stand in a few minutes the whole of it is changed.

Thunder, lightning, tempest, rancorous cheers of accord or even rancorous groans of disapproval, all sides of the House and noise and fury longer, rousing in the air, formed, excited, articulate as the drowsy, lethargic and bored which it had been a few moments before. It is the same with discussion