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SAINT JOHN, FRIDAY MORNING, NOV. 5, 1909.

THE BRITISH COLUMBIA CONTEST.

Premier McBride has strong influences against him. He is a Conservative and the head of a Government which is organized on party lines. Therefore he has against him the influence of the Liberal party on the Coast and the Liberal party at Ottawa. Besides this his railway policy is displeasing to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, whose lines will for some distance be paralleled by the Canadian Northern extension into British Columbia. The Grand Trunk Pacific Company object to another railway through the Yellowhead Pass, dividing a Mountain territory in which the G. T. P. expected to have a monopoly.

Two of Mr. McBride's colleagues have left his ministry. Mr. Tait and Mr. Fulton have no quarrel with the leader of the Government except on the railway policy. The announcement that Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper is also strongly opposed to this programme is not surprising. His condemnation of Mr. McBride is probably not due to this incident alone. It will be remembered by some that Sir Charles differed with Mr. McBride on previous occasions, and that he has not been in close harmony with the Provincial ministry for some years, if indeed he ever was. But Sir Charles has not personally taken any public part in politics of late, and he intimates that he does not propose to do so now.

It is impossible at this time and this distance to know whether Mr. McBride's railway programme will result in a net gain or net loss of support of the British Columbia electorate. On the record of his ministry, his Government seemed to be quite sure of endorsement. He has given the province stable Government which it did not have for a good many years before his time. After ten or twelve years of frequent and abrupt changes of Government, with all manner of political complications, it was a relief to have a Premier who could hold his cabinet together through two legislative terms. In six years before Mr. McBride became the leader of the Government, there had been eight different premiers, and several of these had made or attempted reconstructions. Three premiers had been dismissed by the Lieutenant Governor, and one Lieutenant Governor had been dismissed for improper use of his power. One man had been called upon to form a ministry and had failed in the attempt. Another succeeded only to dissolve the House and be beaten on appeal to the electors, and to resign after three months in office. Still another held on six months. One minister had dismissed a colleague, another ordered two members of his cabinet to resign. One minister resigned in protest against an appointment. Another gave up office after holding it a week. Two of Mr. McBride's colleagues were defeated on seeking re-election when he formed his cabinet.

That was the condition of things when Mr. McBride found when he became Premier six and a half years ago. He has given the province a stable, progressive and generally popular administration. British Columbia has become an orderly province, and great progress has been made in all activities, but most, perhaps, in farming and fruit growing. The Government has taken a strong stand on Provincial autonomy. Its leader has taken the grip with the Dominion and the Convention of Provinces on the question of subsidies. He has stood, first and last, against all influences of corporations, of parties, and of federal, imperial and foreign interests. It will be because of the unpopularity of his railway policy. But he and his friends claim that this programme is both wise and popular. The future will throw more light on that aspect of the case.

THE LORDS AND THE BUDGET.

The House of Lords is now in possession of the Lloyd-George budget. This measure has gone to the Upper House with the solid endorsement of the Liberal party in the popular chamber. It is true that the majority for the bill is only 230 and that the Government majority in the Commons is over 330. But this only means that the Nationalists did not vote. The absence of the Home Rulers is not due to their opposition to the bill so much as because they desire to retain a position of independence or neutrality. It is true, however, that they do not, as a party, approve of the liquor clauses of the measure. There are 350 straight Liberals in the House. Labor representatives and Socialists number 50. If all the Nationalists abstained 379 out of a possible 400 to 410 voted for the measure. That is a large proportion.

After the general election the Conservatives and Unionists had only 157 members. They have gained ten or twelve in the three years since, but are still not over 170. The vote of 149 against the budget bill shows that when allowance is made for those ill or abroad, the available members must have attended in force. Among the Conservatives and Unionists members are a number who are still opposed to tariff reform as advocated by Mr. Chamberlain. Either these do not agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it is a choice between tariff preference and the budget, or else they consider a tariff the lesser evil of the two. There were no supporters of the budget on the Conservative side, and no followers of Lord Rosebery among the Liberals. The argument and protest of the former premier did not win a single Liberal vote, though they may have helped influence the two Liberals who abstained from voting.

It is still uncertain what the Lords will do. Heretofore they have encouraged the rejection of the measure. The Peers might, perhaps, wish some more authoritative instruction than one riding can give, especially when that

counsel is open to various explanations. But if they were in a position of balance between two opinions the London verdict would shake the wavering scale. The Lords have not been wanting in courage in such emergencies, and they have as good opportunity as the members of the other house to judge what the people will say and do. The last time that they sent a government to the people the government was condemned. It was not the Lords but those who threatened them that had to go. If the Lords are against the people they cannot stand, but if they are with the people against the Government, they are safe.

THE WALBERG CONTRACTS.

The case of Mr. E. A. Walberg against the Railway Department concerning which the court at Ottawa has been taking evidence, grows out of a propensity that the Intercolonial authorities have shown to give these contracts to that pushing gentleman either without tender or when others tendered below him. Some half a dozen of his contracts were before the public accounts committee in 1908 and all of them were irregular at some point. He was the middleman in one case, where he was not needed at all, and was paid \$1,414 for \$911 worth of goods. He was paid \$4,470 each for tanks which another contractor offered to provide for \$4,000 each. He got a contract for a heating system at \$5,765, though there was another tender at \$4,300, the department taking Mr. Walberg's opinion that his was better. He was paid \$6,390 each for five hoisting cranes, and passed along the order to a firm which sold them for \$5,200. Mr. Walberg had contracts for buildings at Pictou, Moncton and Charlottetown. The Pictou schedule tender was worked out by the Government as an offer to do the work for \$62,523. Mr. Walberg was paid more than \$100,000. There was a similar development in the Charlottetown contract. He had contracts on a like basis at Moncton, which were let at \$211,000, but which also counted well in extras. No tenders were called for the sewer. Mr. Walberg had his bargain with Chief Engineer Mackenzie, with whom he has had negotiations singularly agreeable and profitable to the contractor.

In 1908 the public accounts committee of the Commons tried to find out something about this sewer, which was then well on to completion. The investigation made some progress but was headed off at a critical and interesting stage on the technical ground that the contractor had not yet received his pay, and that the committee could only inquire into payments. The contractor was still unpaid last session, and no inquiry was allowed. But in the course of the inquiry into the other Walberg contracts, Deputy Minister Butler gave the estimate that the sewer would cost \$18,000 to \$20,000. Mr. Walberg now claims \$150,000. The Moncton Times says that in the recent hearing Contractor Le Blanc said the work would be done for \$25,000, while two Ontario engineers considered it might cost \$56,000, and the Intercolonial Chief Engineer, Mr. McKenzie, testified that Mr. Walberg's claim was not excessive. In view of the evidence given by the chief engineer concerning the purchases from Mr. Walberg as a middleman, and also his testimony in respect to the land deals at Moncton and Halifax, this opinion is not surprising.

A part of the work on the Moncton sewer was done on the 15 per cent. bonus system. The other part was even Walberg at the rate per yard that he was paid for excavation in his building contracts. The evidence of the chief engineer was that the top part was done by the yard. The hard digging was by the bonus system. The bargain was that Mr. Walberg would put on his own men and teams and that the Government would pay him the cost of this labor plus 15 per cent. for his own profit. He hired men from himself, teams from himself, and purchased supplies from himself, and then was paid the fifteen per cent. bonus above the price.

The committee tried to find out what check the Government had, and the chief engineer after much hesitation produced the most astonishing time book that was ever placed in evidence. It was hardly legible. Men and teams were mixed together so no one could tell which was meant. No names of men were given. It would be utterly impossible to show by this book what men were engaged any day. It was after the production of this book that the friends of the Government had the whole inquiry ruled out. Judging by these exhibits, and by the testimony given in the committee, it will be impossible for any court to get at the real expenditure of Mr. Walberg except from his own statements. The contract was grossly improper, and the Deputy Minister himself admitted that it should not have been made. Of course it will not be for the court to decide whether the contract was good or bad, and Walberg must be paid all that the contract gives him.

INTERCOLONIAL FINANCE.

The Intercolonial deficit on that part of the business which the minister is pleased to call current account was \$800,952 for the year ending with last March. This is a much larger deficit than the minister led the House to expect when he made his statement March 16, within a fortnight of the end of the year. He then had no figures to give later than the end of December, though the Canadian Pacific Company, with many times the mileage, could have given him down to the end of February. For the nine months Mr. Graham admitted a deficiency of \$436,954. It appears that he went behind nearly as much in the following three months.

The revenue for 1909 is \$8,527,069, which is \$646,490 less than the year before. But it cost \$3,283,021 to operate the road, and this is \$170,586 more than the cost of handling the larger traffic of the year before. There was a decrease of \$220,000 in passenger earnings, and of \$560,000 in freight earnings. Mails and express earned a little more than the previous year. The only cheerful feature in the comparison is that while there was increased expenditure on way and structures, and also on equipment, the operating expenses were slightly reduced. Election years are apt to swell maintenance outlay.

CORROBORATED.

The Times says that The Standard's statements concerning the steamer Premier are false, but admits that Mr. Pugsley was a shareholder, that he made the speech at the launch, and that the Clifton people have lost the money they put into the ship. It cannot contradict the statement that she cost five times the price for which she has been sold. It admits that Mr. Hazen increased the subsidy given for the service by the late Government. The one thing that the Times contradicts is the statement that the Premier will act as a tender next year to Mr. Pugsley's dredge, and his contradiction is no good.

Here is danger of another split in the Conservative party. The Ottawa Citizen is delighted with the increase of \$40,000 a year in the federal grant to beautify Ottawa, and of the new grant of \$15,000 to Ottawa City, with the understanding that the inside service shall not pay income tax. The Citizen says:—"The present Liberal Government has amply supplemented the promise of its distinguished leader to make Ottawa a city 'beautiful.' To Hon. Mr. Pugsley and Mr. McGovern 'also the Capital owes its sincere thanks.' The Minister of Public Works has even evinced a deep interest in 'the development of Ottawa—an interest second only to that of our esteemed fellow citizen, Sir Wilfrid Laurier.'"

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ROMAN INSCRIPTION THAT CANNOT BE READ

Archaeologists Baffled Over Meaning of Inscription Come Upon at Sepulchre at Rome ---Dates from 16th Century

London, Nov. 4.—A sepulchre discovered recently outside the Church of St. Cecilia in Rome is interesting on account of the inscription engraved on it. This inscription is formed of capital letters without any intervals between the words. Prof. Marucchi after some difficulty succeeded in dividing the words and reading the entire inscription, but the last word is still almost a mystery. The inscription runs as follows: "Here lies in peace Argentina, who lived for fifty years in this sepulchre, which was ceded to her by the Abbess Gratiosa, who prepared it for herself while she was alive. I conjure by the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost and by the terrible day of the Judgment that nobody dare violate this tomb wherein I lie, and if any one dare despite this conjuration may he be cursed like Judas and ---" The word that follows is "Repranam-syriabeat."

Two Readings. Prof. Marucchi proposes two readings of the word. He divides it in the first into "Repranam syri abeat." Here lies in peace Argentina, who lived for fifty years in this sepulchre, which was ceded to her by the Abbess Gratiosa, who prepared it for herself while she was alive. I conjure by the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost and by the terrible day of the Judgment that nobody dare violate this tomb wherein I lie, and if any one dare despite this conjuration may he be cursed like Judas and --- The word that follows is "Repranam-syriabeat."

INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY READY IN THREE WEEKS

Mr. Thomas Malcolm at Montreal Declares That Road is Nearing Completion—Heavy Lumber Cut Anticipated.

Montreal, Nov. 4.—That the International Railway which runs from Campbellton, N. B., across the Province to St. Leonard's on the St. John river, will be completed in three weeks' time if the weather holds good, was the statement made last evening by the Windsor by Mr. Thomas Malcolm, the contractor of this undertaking. The distance from the Bale des Chaleurs to the St. John by the new line is 114 miles, and of this distance some eighty miles have been steered and ballasted, while nearly all the grading has been completed on the balance. Mr. Malcolm said that the amount of supplies this fall for the lumbermen had been something enormous; he believed that there were fully three thousand men in the woods this season, consequently the cut would be very heavy. In fact, the people were just beginning to realize what the completion of the railway in question would mean to the northern section of the province of New Brunswick.

The next move to be taken following the completion of the road from Campbellton to St. Leonard's will be the building of the bridge, for which Mr. Malcolm already possesses a charter from the Canadian Parliament, connecting the International with the road on the other side of the bay, and now being completed down to Gaspe basin. This connection made, a direct outlet for the fresh fish from the Gaspe and Bonaventure shores would be found in the connection made at St. Leonard's with the other Canadian as well as American railway systems.

PROBATE COURT.

Will of Miss Gertrude King. In the Probate court yesterday the will of Miss Gertrude King, formerly of St. John, but lately of Boston, was proved. She had personal property in the city and county of St. John. She gives her jewelry and personal effects to her mother, Mrs. Eleanor L. King, and all the rest of her estate also to her mother to be held in trust to dispose of the same in accordance with private instructions given to her mother. Mrs. King was sworn in as executrix. There is no realty; personal estate under \$12,250; Dr. L. A. Curry, K. C., proctor.

Estate of Richard Wallace. John Richard Wallace, a nephew, was sworn in administrator of the estate of Robert Wallace, farmer, of Gardiner's Creek, who died intestate, leaving a sister, Mary W. Bradshaw, two nephews and two nieces. The sister renounced in his favor. One of the nephews is a resident outside of the province. The nieces, both married women, are children of the late Wallace. Real estate is \$1,500, subject to a mortgage of \$150; personal estate \$310. A. W. Baird, proctor.

Bishop Ill. Quebec, Nov. 4.—Bishop Blais, of Rimouski, was stricken with partial paralysis on Tuesday and is now at the Hotel Dieu Hospital here. His condition is reported a little better this morning, but he is not yet out of danger.



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STATUE OF NERO THE SOURCE OF ILL FORTUNE

The Calamities That Befel the Sculptor, Purchaser and All Who Had To Do With An Italian Masterpiece.

London, Nov. 4.—The Italian sculptor, Signor Gallori modelled about thirty years ago a colossal plaster statue of Nero which made him famous. An English connoisseur bought it for £1,000 and had it conveyed to London where Signor Gallori went in order to have the plaster model carved in marble. There is a legend in Rome that Nero is unlucky and that he brings misfortune, but neither the sculptor nor the purchaser of the statue believed it. When the statue was taken to England its owner suffered a domestic calamity. His wife eloped with an Italian. He sued for a divorce, and when it was granted he remembered Nero's legend and decided to destroy the statue.

To Refund Price. Signor Gallori in order to avert this fate from his masterpiece proposed to refund the price paid for it and then succeeded in saving it. He then made arrangements with a dealer for a private exhibition of the statue, which promised to be a great success, but he was suddenly called back to Italy on account of his mother's death. Shortly afterward he was informed that the dealer who had been engaged in custody had died suddenly and that the statue had disappeared. Signor Gallori then instructed a lawyer to recover the statue if possible and if not to claim damages, but the lawyer, too, died suddenly. Artists are generally superstitious, and Signor Gallori ended by believing in the bad luck of his Nero and gave up all hope of recovering the ill fated statue, which now is still lost. Its disappearance has never been explained, and hardly any one now remembers the colossal statue of Nero except Signor Gallori, who still considers it his masterpiece, but cannot be prevailed upon to attempt its replica.

WEDDINGS.

Jones-Fraser. The wedding of Mrs. Florence A. Fraser to Mr. T. M. Jones of Woodstock took place at four o'clock yesterday afternoon at the residence of the bride's father, Dr. H. G. Addy, 143 Union street. The bridegroom is a barrister and is judge of probates for Carleton county. The ceremony was performed in the presence of the immediate relatives and friends by Rev. C. R. Flinders. The bride, who was unattended, wore a travelling costume of amethyst cloth with hat to match. After the ceremony a wedding supper was served and Mr. and Mrs. Jones left on the six o'clock train for an extended wedding trip before returning to Woodstock, where they will reside.

Piece-King.

A pretty wedding took place yesterday morning in St. Peter's church at 6 o'clock, when Miss Margaret King was united in marriage to Mr. John B. Pierce. The ceremony was performed by Rev. M. Maloney, C. S. R. The bride was becomingly attired in a mauve princess dress with a white satin hat. The bridesmaid, Miss Lena Harrington, wore a dress of navy blue. The groomsmen, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Pierce, brother of the groom, was groomsmen. The groom's present to the bride was a check, to the bridesmaid an amethyst bracelet and to the groomsmen an amethyst scarf pin. Many beautiful presents were received, particularly noticeable among which was a beautiful piece of silverware presented by the members of No. 5 engine house. Mr. and Mrs. Pierce will reside in North End. Last evening there was a reception at 73 Chapel street, when Mr. and Mrs. Pierce received their friends.

DEATHS.

Mrs. Annie E. Stephenson. Mrs. Annie E. Stephenson, wife of Mr. John H. Stephenson, died suddenly yesterday at her residence, 435 Main street. She had been ill but a short time. She is survived by her husband, her father, Mr. E. H. Eagles, two brothers, Jordan of this city, and William of Winnipeg, and four sisters, Mrs. Frank H. McFarland, of this city, Mrs. Kenneth McKay, York county, and Misses M. and Jenny M. at home. The funeral will be held on Saturday at 2:30 o'clock.

ESTATE NOTICE.

All persons having any claims against the Estate of Annie Bichard, late of Goldbrook, in the County of St. John, will present the same duly attested to the undersigned solicitor, and all persons indebted to said Estate will make immediate payment to said solicitor. Dated October 27, 1909. ISABELL CORKERY, Administratrix.

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We Have Arriving ON TUESDAY Another Mixed Lot of FANCY CANADIAN FRUIT. J. F. ESTABROOK & SON, ST. JOHN, N. B. Exhibition Association ANNUAL MEETING. The annual meeting of the members of and shareholders of the Exhibition Association of the City and County of St. John, will be held in the Board of Trade rooms, Prince William street, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, Nov. 9th, 1909, for the election of Directors and such other business as may come before the meeting. J. F. GLEESON, Secretary. A. O. SKINNER, President.

SCENIC ROUTE. Steamer Maggie Miller leaves Millville for Somerville, Kennebecasis Island and Baywater daily except Sunday, at 9 a.m. and 3 and 5 p.m. Returning from Baywater at 7 and 10 a.m. and 3.45 p.m. Sunday at 9.30 a.m., 4.15 p.m. Returning at 10.15 a.m. and 5 p.m. JOHN MCGLOTHLIN, Agent.

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WITH Man: Look here, walked off. Boy: Huh, but

"Hello, Eph! Why 'Ah bin tryin' to 'Why, Ah'm suppo I am a ton ob coal." "Well, den, why ar union?" "Because Ar-kan-sas 'Ouah Jo-jo-faced his Wit de Sheep."