FORTY-SEVEN YEARS IN THE NORTH

James Wyllie, Blacksmith, at Fort Chipewyan, for the Hudson Bay Company, Who Went in in 1861, From Orkney Islands, By Way of Hudson Bay and the Water Route, Has Never Been Out Until Now—Is Astounded at the Progress the World Has Made, But He Wants To Get Back To Freedom.

Far north from civilization upon the rugged banks of Athabasca lake, in the land of the midnight sun, hundreds of miles from the centres of population there has lived for almost half a century a man who now is visiting Edmonton for the first time in his life. Now he is seeing, when past his three score years and fast approaching the allotted span of human existence, some of the sights which he has many times heard of but never witnessed before. To him for a generation the progressive march of civilization has been a closed book and in his declining years he longs again for the freedom of the wild. The life of the city with its bustle and its noise has no charms for him and to the north he will turn his way in a short time.

In the latter part of July, 1862, Wm. Wylie, now of Fort Chipewyan, then a lad of sixteen years of age, strolled down the little pier in one of the Orkney Islands, north of Scotland, to meet a ship that had just come into port. It was the full rigged three-master Prince of Wales, one of the merchant ships of the Hudson's Bay company, then on route to the far distant fur fields of Canada. The young lad was fired with a desire to see the world and he was not slow to seize the opportunity to cross the ocean. Timidly he approached the captain and asked permission to enlist in the service of the Hudson's Bay Co., the great controlling corporation of Northwestern Canada.

Leaves for the Northwest.

"You look a little too young but you are strong and husky and I'll take you," young Wylie was told and his heart throbbed with suppressed emotion as he hurried home to tell of his good luck. Soon his belongings were packed together and he set sail for the little-known land as an employee of the Hudson's Bay Co., in whose service he has been ever since.

The trip across the Atlantic was an uneventful one, said Mr. Wylie yesterday afternoon, when telling to the Bulletin representative the story of his life in the north, but it brought him new joys as the great wide world unfolded to his view. For five weeks the ship ploughed through the green waters of the Atlantic with prow ever turned towards the setting sun till in the closing days of August the rocky shores of northern Labrador rose up from out the horizon and gradually became more distinct to the eye. For some days, however, the ship was compelled to lay to because of ice at the mouth of the straits into which it was not thought wise to run. Eventually a clear passage was found and under full sail the Prince of Wales bore down upon York factory on the western side of Hudson's Bay.

Sets Foot on a New Land.

What emotions filled the breast of the young man as for the first time he placed foot upon a new continent and gazed upon a new breed of beings, the Indians, who then were practically the sole inhabitants of the Northwest, it would be difficult to imagine and certainly impossible of description.

In the winter of 1862-1863 William Wylie gained his first experiences of life in the American continent by his residence at Fort York. Little he thought when feelings of homesickness occasionally overshadowed him, that almost half a century should pass over his head and never again should he see his home land.

"Fort York was a new world to me," he said to the Bulletin representative, "but it was only a foretaste of the pleasure that I experienced in the spring when we left for the interior posts of the Hudson's Bay Co." The barrenness of the Orkneys was replaced by the timbered and prairie country of what is now Northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and life in the great lone land soon became surrounded by a fascination that has never since been dispelled.

Leaves for Fort Chipewyan.

In the spring time Wylie left with the Hudson's Bay packets for the interior, their destination being Fort Chipewyan on the western end of Lake Athabasca, near the inflow of the Peace. The trip of over a thousand miles occupied the entire summer and when the York boats at last pulled up to Fort Chipewyan the short days and long nights of fall had arrived and long dreary winter was beginning to settle down over the land. The trip from York factory was made by Norway House, on the north of Lake Winnipeg, then down the lake to Grand rapids, the empty ing point of the Saskatchewan, up the Saskatchewan and Cumberland rivers past the present city of Prince Albert and on to Isle la Crosse. Then the trip led down the Clearwater to Portage la Loche, where a twelve-mile overland tramp brought the party to the Chipewyan river and down to the lake upon which the palisaded H. B. fort then stood. Now the palisades have passed away and little remains of the protection needed in early times against the Indians.

Many Incidents of Life.

On the incidents of the forty-five years spent by Mr. Wylie at Fort Chipewyan many a book might be written. But while there is much that is romantic in a lifetime spent far away from civilization among the Indians there is also much that would seem prosaic to the dwellers of the plain. To the old Hudson's Bay employee, however, there is only one life.

"I'm going down to Fort Chipewyan where I'm free," he said. "Here I'm a prisoner; when I'm home I can shoot, fish and cut wood to my heart's content."

Thus the lure of the wild attracts him and life in Edmonton is but an impatient wait for the more alluring life of the lonely country of the north.

First Visit to Edmonton.

Mr. Wylie came down to Edmonton in the early part of September, having left the fort on the 7th of August. It was his intention to go on a visit to his old home in the Orkneys, where two brothers and two sisters still live, and he had been given a free trip by the Hudson's Bay company. But modern life was too much for the old man and when he reached Winnipeg he would proceed no further and after a short visit he came back to Edmonton. Now he is staying with his son-in-law, James Fraser, of 237 Edmiston street.

To the old northerner Edmonton is a strange land. Never till his visit to Winnipeg had he seen a street car or a railway train. An automobile was a phantom machine and a phonograph was beyond the power of understanding. Eleven years ago, while on a trip down to Fort Smith, which by the way was one of the few occasions on which he left Fort Chipewyan, he saw an electric light on the steamer Grahame. Neither did telephones possess such strangeness for there are some instruments now in use in the north.

No Trouble From Indians.

During Mr. Wylie's long residence at Fort Chipewyan, where he plies the trade of a blacksmith and gunsmith there has never been any trouble from the Indians. During the Riel rebellion the crew of the steamer at Fort McMurray feared an attack from the red men and so she was kept in mid-stream by hawsers stretched from either bank, with steam ready to leave at a moment's notice in the event of an attack.

"Did you never want to go back to your old home?" the reporter asked.

"No; I never wanted much to leave the Fort, for I feel all at home there. I don't like this part of the country for I am not used to it," was the reply.

"Do you read the papers up north?"

"I used to read them for a spell, but I soon lost my interest and now I understand so little of the things outside that I do not bother."

A Pension Next Year.

On May 3rd he will be entitled to a pension from the Hudson's Bay Co. At the coming election for the first time he will exercise his franchise and poll a vote in the Edmonton district.

In all of Northwest Canada there is only one older white resident than Wm. Wylie. He is Timothy Gaudette, of Fort Good Hope, also an employee of the company. Gaudette has been 56 years a resident of the north. Forty-six years ago he made a short trip to Montreal and upon his return he has made his headquarters ever since at Fort Hope. Much of his time in recent years was taken up in selling meat in different part of the Yukon. He, too, is fast growing old and in a short time will pass from the country where for over half a century he has made his home. With his demise there will be removed the oldest living resident of the far Northwest Canada.

MINISTER EXPLAINS PURPOSE OF THE ACT

Hon. Frank Oliver Says There is Apparent Conflict Between Two Clauses in Veterans' Grant Act—Dual Intention of Parliament Was to Recognize Service of Soldiers and Advance Settlement of West.

Regina, Oct. 14—Hon. Frank Oliver, minister of interior, was in the city tonight and was interviewed respecting the telegram which the South African Service association sent to Sir Wilfrid Laurier protesting against "The action of the minister of the interior in making it obligatory for a veteran on locating on land to declare his intention to begin residence within six months instead of before June 1st, 1911, as provided in Volunteer Bounty act."

Mr. Oliver explained that there was an apparent conflict between the two portions of the act. In one place it was stated that homestead duties must be performed in accordance with the provisions of the Dominion Lands act, which requires a homesteader to begin within six months after the date of entry, and in another place giving the final date on which a volunteer might locate land. There was fault in the drafting which permitted of the construction that the residence need not begin until six months after January 1, 1911.

"This is the date on which the right to locate expires and the clause was clearly not intended to set aside the provisions of the Dominion Land act as to residence. A ruling from the department was therefore necessary, and the ruling which the department has given is both in accordance with the well known intention of the act and the wording outside of the flaw already mentioned.

"The object of parliament in granting the scrip," said Mr. Oliver, "was to recognize the services to the empire of the men who went to South Africa, but while achieving this object it was also intended that the bounty should operate to the advantage of actual settlement in western Canada. Recognition of service and western settlement are the dual principles underlying the act and it must be administered with both purposes in view. It would not have tended toward the good will of the general public toward the South African veterans' land grant that the act should be administered so as to permit the land, to the amount o fover two million acres, being held for three years without residence or cultivation, as might have been the case if the department had ruled otherwise than as complained of."

NO KNOWLEDGE OF REPORT.

Washington Despatch With Reference to Barbadoes Not Heard of.

Ottawa, Oct. 15—The deputy minister of trade and commerce, when seen in respect to a despatch from Washington, stating that the proposal of a preferential tariff adopted by the legislative council of Barbadoes in favor of Canada is not likely to become effective owing to a failure of Canada to act, said that the department had no knowledge of such an action on the part o Barbadoes. It would be time to take action when Barbadoes notifies Canada officially. In the meantime Barbadoes enjoys the Canadian preferential tariff on sugar and other products.

CANMORE FOR STEWART.

Enthusiastic Joint Meeting Held in Canmore—Dr. Stewart Speaks Well.

Canmore, Oct. 14.—Canmore town hall was crowded to-night, when a Liberal meeting took place. At least it would have a Liberal meeting if the Conservatives and Socialists had not been represented, with the result that the time was divided impartially among the speakers of the three parties. The audience showed much enthusiasm towards Dr. Stewart and Mr. Quayle, who spoke on behalf of the Liberal party, and listened to Dr. Brett, Conservative, and F. Sherman, the Socialist candidate, with patient courtesy.

The chair was taken by Mr. Stirton. Dr. Stewart made one of the best speeches which he has delivered throughout the campaign. After thanking the people of Canmore for the large Liberal vote which they had given at the previous election, he proceeded to discuss the tariff question, and pointed out thta the tariff had been greatly reduced by the Liberal government. Referring to the burning question of railways, Dr. Stewart said that the country owed the existence of the C.N.R. and other railways to the Liberal party. "I am in favor of any government, such as the Liberal government, which will use its best endeavors to bring all the railways, from wherever they may hail, to Calgary," said Dr. Stewart.

Queen's to Separate From Church.

Kingston, October 15.—Queen's University trustees, after considering the relation of the institution to the Presbyeran Church, decided by a vote of fifteen to three, to seek separation. The following resolution will go before the general assembly: "The trustees beg to express the opinion that the altered condition with which the university has had o deal in later times calls for a removal of denominational disabilities in the charter of the university."

Lord Fitzmaurice in Cabinet.

London, Oct. 13—Lord Fitzmaurice parliamentary secretary of the foreign office, has been given a seat in the cabinet as chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, succeeding Vice-Viscount Wolverhampton, who has been appointed lord president of the council and lord of the privy seal in succession to the Earl of Crewe.

CHURCHES PLEDGED TO $25,000 ANNUALLY

Edmonton and Strathcona Respond to the Call For Money for the Laymen's Missionary Movement—Agree to More Than Triple the Present Givings to Foreign Missions.

The closing meeting in the campaign of the Laymen's Missionary Movement, which has been so successfully conducted in this city, was held in McDougall Methodist Church last evening. The particular purpose of this mass meeting was to receive the report of the special committee, which was appointed on the occasion of the banquet in the Y.M.C.A. on Monday evening, to arrive at a standard to which the denominational churches of Edmonton should attain in their missionary givings.

Yesterday afternoon at four o'clock representatives of the Presbyterian, Anglican, Baptist and Methodist churches met separately in the Y.M.C.A. and decided what each denomination could be depended on to give. Later a joint meeting of the representatives was held, with W. W. Chown in the chair, when the respective sums were totalled and several resolutions were adopted, which was included in the report last evening.

To Raise $25,000 Annually.

That $25,000 be raised annually by the churches of Edmonton and Strathcona for missions was the important feature of the report read last night by J. W. Ward, secretary of the committee. Further recommendations were the appointment of a strong missionary committee in each church for carrying forward the work of raising the funds and the appointment of a permanent co-operating committe as follows:

Anglican, Messrs. Ridgeway Smith and W. H. Clark, Edmonton, and H. F. Sandeman, Strathcona; Presbyterian, Dr. D. J. Dunn, F. Fulmer and one to be appointed for Strathcona; Baptist, H. H. Hall, W. R. Bolton, Edmonton, and Robert Ritchie, Strathcona; Methodists, W. W. Chown, A. T. Cushing, Edmonton, and one to be appointed for Strathcona.

After the report was unanimously adopted, the chairman of the evening, W. W. Chown, called on representatives of the church for Edmonton and Strathcona to state what they had decided to give individually. The sums are as follows: Anglicans $3,500, Presbyterians $8,500, Baptists $7,500, and Methodists $7,000, making a grand total of $26,500. The total givings for missions last year by the churches of Edmonton and Strathcona was $7,000.

It was moved by Messrs. Cushing and Ross that the central co-operating committee prepare a circular concerning the work, and this be used in assisting to spread the missionary cause.

Mr. Stackhouse Speaks.

Rev. Mr. Stackhouse, who is representing the Baptist Church of Canada in the campaign, is a tower of strength, physically and intellectually, in connection with the movement to interest business men in the evangelization of the heathen world. He laid before the meeting the cause for which the Laymen's Missionary Movement was called into existence. Three questions were discussed, viz.: Can we solve the problem? Have we the men? Have we the money? I have reached the point, said Mr. Stackhouse, where I am looking forward to the time when the aim of the Laymen's Missionary Movement will have become a splendid achievement. If I live thirty years longer I want to be present at the meeting where the proclamation will be made that the gospel had been given to all the nations of the earth.

The movement places at the doors of the Christian world the responsibility of increasing the laborers on the mission fields from thirteen million to forty million, and of raising the funds to maintain these laborers. This means that the American continent will be expected to provide an increase of missionaries from their present 4,000 to 20,000 and the expenditure from nine million to 40 million. Canada's share of the responsibility is the increasing of her 300 missionaries to 1,600 and the expenditure from $600,000 to $3,000,000,000.

Mr. Stackhouse answered his three queries conclusively by showing the signs of victory all over the continent. He closed his address by an appeal for the cause of Christ on earth.

Dr. MacKay's Address.

Rev. Dr. MacKay, who is representing the Presbyterian Church of Canada in the campaign, took the audience of a missionary tour through inland China. He pointed out how the fields are white for the harvest and how the teeming millions of heathendom are yearning for the light of Christianity. He told how Mahomedan religion is retarding its fall way, and how the heathen mind can no longer resist the Christian faith. Mr. White predicts an outpouring of spiritual blessing in Edmonton and Strathcona, and eloquently unfolded the beauty of a life of self-sacrifice.

BOSTON BRITISH HONOR BRYCE.

Ambassador Predicts a Peaceful Settlement of European Questions.

Boston, Oct. 14.—Boston men of British birth and ancestry and Canadians and Britons joined last night in honoring the British ambassador to the United States, the Hon. James Bryce, at a dinner at the Hotel Somerset. The dinner was given by the Canadian Club of Boston with the co-operation of the Victorian Club, the International Club, the British Charitable Society and the Scots Charitable Society.

British, French, Scotch and American flags formed an international setting behind the British ambassador as he rose amid the applause of the gatherings of the British Empire. Ambassador Bryce declared there was never a time when both Canada and the United States were so closely linked and equally desirous of securing peace for themselves and the whole world.

The signs of "no trespass" the ambassador declared were up on the questions he would like to talk to talk of and would perhaps be of the most interest but would refrain. Of the trouble in south-east Europe he thought there would be a pacific solution found.

WHAT MONEY CANNOT BUY.

Is a Million Worth Having When Happiness Is Completed Now.

Chicago, Oct. 14.—Heir to a fortune more than $1,000,000, but uncertain if he really can afford to accept the heritage on account of the present happiness of his family, is the strange position of Emil Ascher who lives contentedly with his wife and eight children in a Prairie avenue flat.

In 1888 Joseph Ascher, an uncle, died in London, leaving neither will nor clue to his relatives. Six months ago Mrs. Ascher received a letter from a friend of hers in Germany, near the place where she was born, saying that a family named Ascher had fallen heir to a large fortune. After several communications Mrs. Ascher received a letter from her cousin yesterday, in which it was stated that her husband was certain to share to the extent of at least $1,000,000 in the Joseph Ascher. Falling heir to a million, however, did not seem to produce the thrill in Mrs. Ascher or her family that might be expected in these commercial times. She found cause for displeasure instead of joy, and feared that so much money in their family might disrupt the prevailing genuine happiness in her little flat. Mr. Ascher is sixty years old and contented that he has raised a family of eight children. In addition he has a business which affords a comfortable income.

Department Accepts Report.

Ottawa, Ont., October 14.—The Department of Labor has been notified of the Government railway's acceptance of the terms of the award recently made under the Lemieux Act, allowing an increase of from 15 to 20 per cent. in the pay of the Intercolonial freight clerks. The board recommend the staff be reduced in size and the money so saved to be applied to an increase of the salaries of those remaining.

Hebrew Voter 105 Years Old.

New York, Oct. 12.—Samuel Harris, a hundred and five years old, has arrived in New York from Jerusalem and registered. He comes each presidential year to cast his vote. He was born in the gold excitement of '49. Naturalized in California, and walked on the Pacific coast to New York.

Died as Result of Fall.

Kingston, October 15. — Henry O'Hara, aged 74, while picking apples fell and died from the internal injuries.

MUCK-RAKING BASIS OF TORY CAMPAIGN

Mr. C. A. Grant and Dr. Strong Speakers at Liberal Rally. Former Presents Strong Argument in Support of the Liberal Government's Progressive Policy, as Contrasted with the Conservative Policy of Slander.

The Liberal rally held last night in the Liberal committee room was attended by a body of men representative of every interest in the city, men who are imbued with an enthusiasm derived from the knowledge that their political fight is on the side of a good and the right cause. Wm. Rea, principal of the Eden High school occupied the chair. In his introductory remarks he said two essential factors in winning any campaign were a good cause and a good candidate. That the Liberals of Edmonton had both these he knew was unquestioned by Liberals and should be admitted by Conservatives.

Mr. C. A. Grant, of the firm of Bishop & Grant, was the first speaker. At the outset Mr. Grant said his appearance at a Liberal campaign meeting was due to his analysis of the policies of the two parties, an analysis which disclosed a paucity of subject matter in the policies advocated by the Conservative party.

When the general election were announced he said it might naturally have been that the Conservative party would appeal to the country on the platform drawn up by the leader of the opposition, the Halifax platform, a platform the remnants of which were now scattered to the four winds, but instead of doing so, the Conservative party's policy and campaign were slander and scandal. He called it muck-raking.

A Paucity of Material.

Referring to the address of the Conservative candidate for the Edmonton constituency delivered at the public meeting in the Thistle rink last Friday, he said he could find only two grounds on which Mr. Henderson appealed for support. The first of these was that the Conservative party would build the Hudson Bay railway, and the second concerned the administration of the timber resources of the country. Referring to the Hudson Bay railway project, Mr. Grant said this was one of the big issues in the campaign so far as the Liberal party was concerned. The Government's intention to build this road had been announced and the preliminary work had been vigorously inaugurated when the Conservative candidate in Edmonton decided this undertaking should be embraced in the Conservative party's platform. But the speaker failed to find any mention of it in the Halifax platform. This appropriation of Liberal policies by the Conservative party was characteristic, however, and was evidenced in the sudden and remarkable change in the attitude of the Conservative party toward the Grand Trunk Pacific railway.

Two "Decent" Ones.

Dealing with Mr. Hyndman's pronouncement that the great issue in the present campaign was honesty and decency in administration, Mr. Grant said the Conservative leader had as his lieutenants in this campaign two men, Hon. Geo. E. Foster and Premier Roblin. Were the Conservatives returned these two valiant swashbucklers would find cabinet positions. What was the record of these two men. Geo. E. Foster, who would unquestionably become finance minister, was the man, who as president of the Union Trust Company, an officer under salary to administer the funds of this company, had accepted 25 cents per acre for allowing the Union Trust funds to be used for the purchase of the Swan River lands, a deal in which Premier Roblin secured $2 per acre. Was such a glaring breach of trust the qualification the people of Canada demanded satisfied in the minister who would administer the funds of the Dominion? The speaker maintained and he made a strong point of the contention, that a man with such a record, was not only not to be trusted but he was a positive menace to the country.

The Land Question.

Turning his attention to the real issues of the campaign, Mr. Grant took up the land question. He read from Borden's Halifax platform two planks as follows: First, the management and development of the public domain for the public benefit, and second, the restoration of the public domain to the two new provinces. The speaker showed how completely these planks offset each other. If the public domain were to be restored—and he found fault with the use of the word restored, for if he knew anything of the negotiations by which Canada became possessed of the lands in the northwest by purchasing them from the Hudson's Bay Co., they had never belonged to the provinces—the public domain could surely not be administered by the Federal authorities for the public benefit, and if it were to be administered for the public benefit it could not be handed over to provincial control. When Premier Laurier said the Borden platform was india rubber, and truly fearfully and wonderfully conceived he put the matter in a nushell. To any man who gave the question serious thought it was apparent that the agreement by which lands were administered by the Federal government was advantageous to the province. At present the province received $375,000 per annum in lieu of these lands. This subsidy would increase to $1,125,000 per annum. If the province owned the lands to secure this revenue it would be necessary to sell the lands, and if they were sold it would be the settler who would buy them. At present the settler was given land free. To have the lands administered by the province, therefore, must result in retarding settlement.

The Tariff Question.

Dealing with the question of the tariff the speaker pointed out that since 1896 the tariff had been reduced 20 per cent. This reduction last year meant a saving to the people of Canada of $8,000,000. That represented the difference between a high protective tariff and a tariff for revenue purposes only. He referred to Rufus Pope's pronouncement that what Canada needed was a tariff as high as a Chinese wall. This was the avowed policy of the Conservative party, a policy which meant the taxing of the people for the benefit of the manufacturers. He quoted John Burns, the eminent labor member of the British House of Commons, who, referring to the conditions existing in the United States as a result of the high protective tariff policy, a country to which the Conservative party pointed as an argument in favor of their high tariff policy, as hell with the lid off.

Dealing with the fiscal policy of the Liberal Government Mr. Grant said the Liberals had been charged with extravagance "criminal extravagance" as Mr. Foster put it, and further, that when the Liberals were in power objection had been made to the increased expenditures of the then Conservative government. The latter was true, and the fact that under the Liberal government the expenditures of the country had increased largely, was also true. But there was a marked difference in the conditions applying to the cases in point. The Liberal opposition prior to 1896 objected to increased expenditure because the then Conservative government returned to parliament each year a financial statement showing an excess of expenditure over revenue. This was not the case with the Liberal government. Each year of their regime except 1897, the Liberal government had shown a big surplus of receipts over expenditures, the surplus growing from $1,700,000 in 1898 to $16,400,000 in 1907. Therein lay the radical difference in the two cases. Furthermore the Liberal government was able to show these immense surpluses despite the fact that the tariff had been reduced 20 per cent.

Mr. Grant showed how under the Liberal regime the post office department had shown each year since 1903 a surplus whereas in the years prior to 1896 there had been invariably deficit succeeding deficit. He also contrasted the increase of the national debt by $118,000,000 in the eighteen years of Conservative government, with the increase of the national debt in the twelve years of Liberal government by only $47,500,000, and at the same time the Liberal government having expended $27,000,000 in a capital expenditure in connection with the G.T.P. the difference being met by current revenue.

Mr. Grant's concluding remarks were in the nature of an appeal to the audience to consider the policies of the two parties, and having decided which was the better, to go forth and preach the gospel.

Rev. Arthur Murphy, who also was to have spoken, was unable to be present he having been called into the country. Dr. Strong closed the meeting with a rousing speech calling upon the Liberals in the city to wind up the closing week of the campaign with an energetic burst of speed. He said he had been in the country districts lately, and had come in contact with the campaign being conducted by the Conservative candidate, which in its nature of absolute misrepresentation of the issues and the dissemination of unsupported scandals, was a disgrace to the Conservative party and to Mr. Hyndman as well.

The meeting closed with cheers for Hon. Frank Oliver.

Arthur Barton rendered several piano selections prior to the meeting and during the intervals between the speeches.

Haskell Makes a Statement.

Kansas City, Oct. 13—Governor Haskell arrived here to-day, and made public a letter addressed to President Roosevelt concerning the six hundred thousand acres of Osage Indian oil lands. He asserts that the compensation for the land was too small.

Eye on British Columbia.

London, Oct. 12—Colonel Lamb, of the Salvation Army, has returned from Canada and is greatly gratified by the promise held out to emigrants in British Columbia, which Lamb thinks one of the most vigorous and prosperous provinces in the Dominion of Canada.

WHAT THEY THINK OF IT.

FROM THE CITY COUNCIL OF MEDICINE HAT.

Medicine Hat,
August, 21, 1908.

The Honorable Frank Oliver,
Minister of the Interior,
Ottawa.

Sir,—Whereas, it is of the utmost importance to the city of Medicine Hat and the surrounding district, that the vast area of the unoccupied lands, should be settled upon and brought under cultivation, and owing to the semi-arid conditions prevailing in the district, and the uncertainty of the rainfall during the season when it is most required, this can never be accomplished until some practical system is put into operation, by which the abundant flow of water from the Rocky mountains can be conserved and held by a system of reservoirs and basins located at various points over the highlands throughout the district, and distributed over the lowlands by a system of lateral canals, and it was with **pleasant anticipations we looked forward to the Southern Alberta Land company commencing work upon a plan of this nature some two years ago, whereby they contemplated in a short time, having some 380,000 acres guaranteed a plentiful supply of water for irrigation purposes, independent of rainfall,** which is so uncertain in this district, and **our community having full knowledge of the facts and the work having been done by the company, fully recognize and believe that the salvation of this district depends very largely on the success of this enterprise.**

This cannot be exemplified to better advantage than by looking over the report of Mr. W. C. McKilligan, acting judge of the standing grain competition carried on under the auspices of the department of agriculture, and in which he found only two fields to which he could conscientiously award prizes. All the others are reported by him as being destroyed by drought. This report was handed by him to the secretary of the Agricultural society under date of August 8, 1908, and which we have no doubt will be available for your inspection in the files of the department of agriculture.

We are also aware that a great deal of opposition is being engendered to this enterprise, by parties claiming that it closes up large tracts of land that otherwise would be available for homesteading. Our answer to this is, that possessing intimate knowledge of the country embraced in the scheme, we have no hesitation in saying, and we challenge contradiction, **that the land is valueless for other than grazing purposes, without a guaranteed supply of water, and that the company has already expended in the neighborhood of $100,000 in preliminary surveys, drilling, etc., and** that we further consider the present time very opportune for the immediate construction and completion of same, many men being out of employment and labor plentiful, also a large number of railway contractors are about finished with their present work and in a position to undertake new contracts.

Under these conditions, **we, the members of the Council of the City of Medicine Hat, believing that we are voicing the sentiment of the city and district, when we say that we sincerely hope that you, as minister of the interior, will use every endeavor with the Federal government, in granting any reasonable concessions to the Southern Alberta Land company, so that they may be enabled to bring about a speedy consummation, and to put into practical operation, their irrigation enterprise, which is of such vital importance to intending settlers in the district, as we fully believe that lands in this neighborhood are as good as can be found in Western Canada, if guaranteed a plentiful supply of water, being familiar and conversant with the work already done, and with the objects and plans of the company. This we think, will be accomplished by them, and we, therefore, humbly pray that your government grant this company every assistance in their power to bring about an early completion of this work.**

(Sgd.) WM. COUSENS, Mayor.

Moved by Ald. Huckvale, seconded by Ald. Forster: "That the letter as read be sent to the Hon. Frank Oliver, minister of the interior, signed by the mayor, under the seal of the city."—Carried.

FROM THE BOARD OF TRADE.

22nd August, 1908.

The Honorable Frank Oliver,
Minister of the Interior,
Ottawa.

Sir,—I am requested by the council of the board of trade to forward to you the enclosed resolution, passed unanimously by them on the afternoon of Saturday, the 22nd of August, 1908.

I beg to remain,
Your obedient servant,
MEDICINE HAT BOARD OF TRADE
J. T. Hall, Commissioner.

Moved by Mr. F. F. Fatt, seconded by Mr. T. Hutchinson: "That the Council of the Medicine Hat Board of Trade are heartily in accord with, and **fully endorse, the resolution passed by the City Council on August 21st, memorializing the minister of the interior to use his influence with the Federal government, to make such changes, and grant any reasonable concessions to the Southern Alberta Land company, so as to enable them to complete their irrigation enterprise at an early date.**"—Carried.

FROM THE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

The Medicine Hat Agricultural Society,
Medicine Hat, Alta.,
August 25, 1908.

The Honorable Frank Oliver,
Minister of the Interior,
Ottawa.

Sir,—At the urgent request of a large number of the settlers of the district, a special meeting of the directors of the Medicine Hat Agricultural society was called for Saturday, the 22nd inst., to consider the situation of the farmers in the district.

Owing to the exceptionally dry season, the farmers throughout the whole district extending forty miles to the south, and thirty miles to the west, north and east, are almost entirely without any crops. Potatoes also are a failure all round, with very few exceptions.

The question of how these people are to live throughout the winter is a very serious one. The district even in our best years is a very doubtful one, so far as growing grain is concerned.

This agricultural society offered a number of good prizes for fields of standing grain this season. We had quite a number of entries made in the season, but about the first of this month a number withdrew their entries, and out of the balance, the judge, Mr. McKilligan, awarded only two prizes, a first for wheat, and a second for oats, and stated in his report that the grain was destroyed by drought.

After fully considering the question the following resolution was put to the meeting and carried unanimously:—

"That owing to the almost complete failure of the crops by drought in this whole district, **we would respectfully urge upon the government at Ottawa the speedy construction of the irrigation works of the Southern Alberta Land Company, Ltd., which would give employment to men and teams, and further that we consider that the land is utterly worthless for anything but grazing, unless a plentiful supply of water can be had for irrigation.**"

The secretary was instructed to forward a copy of this resolution to the Honorable the Minister of the Interior, at Ottawa.

JOHN HALL, Secretary.