

THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1910.

THE SINGLE TAX IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Some fifteen years ago or more a good deal of space in The Guardian was devoted by the editor of that time to the advocacy of the single tax on land values. Not much has been said on the subject in these columns of late but a partial application of the underlying principle has been made in many lands. The Lloyd George Budget, for instance takes into account the "unearned increment" in the growing value of land, which was a large feature in the early advocacy of the single tax. An article by John McMillan in the Boston Common tells of the growth of the single tax movement of which he was a promoter, in British Columbia and of some results that have followed. In the early days of the settlement in the Pacific Province large tracts of land fell into the possession of single individuals. One family held a grant of 2,500,000 acres of the most easily accessible land of the Province, to be exempt from taxation forever so long as it was held by this family. In many other cases large tracts were thus locked up and held unimproved for speculative purposes. Those who had lands would not improve them and those who wanted land to improve could not get it. Then came the advocacy of single

tax, which made considerable headway, and eventually a small number of single taxers were elected to the Legislature. The leaves began to work and taxes were laid on unimproved lands, while taxes on improvements were reduced. Improvements came to be taxed at only half their value. In the first year after Vancouver city came under this law the building permits issued by the city more than doubled. A year or two later the exemption on improvements was increased to 75 per cent and again the number of building permits was doubled. Last year the value of permits issued slightly exceeded \$7,000,000. This year taxation of improvements has been abolished and in seven months the building permits ran above \$7,250,000. That is the way the city is building up. The wild land tax, 13 mills, as against 7 mills on cleared land throughout the Province, now yields a handsome return. And now comes Prince Rupert, the youngest of British Columbia cities, beginning her first year as a city under the plan of collecting all her civic revenue from land values. The system encourages building and improvement, and has apparently much to recommend it, besides its simplicity.

POLITICS IN NOVA SCOTIA.

A general election is due in Nova Scotia, where the present House of Assembly was elected in June 1906. The Liberal party has been in power in that Province since August 1882, respectively under the leadership of Hon. W. T. Pipes, 1882-4, Hon. W. S. Fielding 1884-96, and Hon. George H. Murray since the latter date. Thus the party has enjoyed the long term of twenty-eight years of power. Throughout that period the Opposition has grown weaker, and at the last general election only returned three members.

Compared with Prince Edward Island the legislative and governmental machinery of Nova Scotia is quite large and costly. The Premier receives \$5,000 and the other ministerial heads of departments \$4,000 each. The Legislature is composed of two Houses, a Legislative Council of 21 members, whose sessional indemnity is \$500 each and a Legislative Assembly of 38 members who get \$700 each and a travelling allowance of 30 cents per mile. The Speaker receives \$800 per annum in addition.

Oppositions are always hopeful of a change, and it would be remarkable indeed if in the coming contest there were not some considerable addition to the Conservative representation in the House. Indeed their strength might be increased three fold without endangering the stability of the Murray Government, which is still apparently strong. In the federal Parliament the Conservatives

hold one third of the seats allotted to Nova Scotia, and the right working of the party system would seem to require that one third part at least of the membership in the Legislature should sit on the Opposition side.

DEATH OF GOVERNOR FRASER.

The death of Lieutenant Governor Fraser of Nova Scotia, which occurred yesterday morning, will be learned with regret throughout Canada. He was very widely and favorably known. In his day he had filled many public positions. He had been successively Mayor of his native town of New Glasgow, member of the Legislative Assembly, the Legislative Council and government of Nova Scotia, followed by four years as Lieutenant Governor.

Governor Fraser was the eleventh Governor of his Province since confederation and the third to die while holding that office. Hon. Joseph Howe died in 1873 very shortly after his appointment and Hon. A. W. McLellan died in 1890 after serving two years. The late Governor Fraser was a man of giant frame, fine talents and had many qualities that appealed to popular favor. A staunch Liberal and an able and versatile public speaker, he had been often heard in legislative halls and on public platforms as the advocate and exponent of Liberal doctrines and policies. While generally popular, he was especially so among the clansmen of Scottish birth or descent. Nova Scotia, which has been singularly fruitful of able public men, will mourn his death as a public loss.

AN ISLANDER FOR CONGRESS.

Police Commissioner Stephen O'Meara of Boston, a native of Prince Edward Island, is now in the limelight as a possible Republican candidate for Congress. There are three Congressional Districts in Boston, the Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh respectively. These districts have for some years past returned Democrats to Congress, but for various reasons there are now chances that the Eleventh District may be brought back

into the Republican column.

Commissioner O'Meara and Alderman W. D. Cotton are candidates for the nomination in the coming Republican convention. The Boston Common points out that there is a majority of Republicans in the District who lost some previous elections by not being united; that the party would now cordially unite to elect either Mr. O'Meara or Mr. Cotton if nominated by the convention; that Mr. Cotton by an energetic personal canvass has secured many pledges of support, while Mr. O'Meara has declined to make a personal campaign because he is Police Commissioner, and will not resign that position until and unless he is nominated by the convention.

There appears to be no doubt of Mr. O'Meara's popularity, although under the circumstances the nomination may go to his rival, Mr. Cotton. The Boston Common says "the Republican State committee and the congressional committee and all the ward committee men, with few exceptions, agree that Mr. O'Meara would be able under ordinary conditions to put up the strongest possible fight against the Democratic candidate."

No other man has had so long a continuous term as Premier of Canada as Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who is now in his fifteenth year of power. Sir John Macdonald enjoyed two terms in that office, the first something over six years and the second of twelve years and eight months, which was terminated by his death. He was Premier for nineteen years in all.

A proposed amendment to the election law in Wisconsin will make it possible for the wife of a man to cast his vote in a state election if the man is unable by reason of sickness or unavoidable absence to do so himself. The underlying theory is that the voting privilege is not for the man alone, but for the family, and in the absence of the man, his wife, duly accredited by him, ought to be allowed to cast the family vote. This seems to be a reasonable proposition although an entirely new one.

British trade is prosperous in these days. For the last eight months. British imports were valued at \$2,178,000,000, an increase of \$177,000,000 over the corresponding period of 1909. The exports showed

an increase \$185,000,000 for the same period. In the month of August alone the increase in exports was \$32,000,000 over those of August last year. Britain still holds her own manfully in her vast overseas trade, her unprecedented shipping tonnage and the powerful and unrivalled navy which protects her commerce.

The Halifax Recorder takes rather strange grounds on the representation question. It argues that representation by population is the only fair basis and as it was agreed to by New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, they have little to complain of when their representation is reduced. But with Nova Scotia it is different according to the Recorder, because that Province was legislated into the union without the consent of her people! On this basis it will fit us little to be hitched up with Nova Scotia on the representation question, or with New Brunswick either.

Based on our separate and special terms of union with Canada as understood by this Province as one of the contracting parties, our claim to the full representation accorded to the Island in 1873 is much stronger than either of the other Maritime Provinces.

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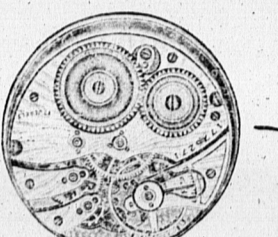
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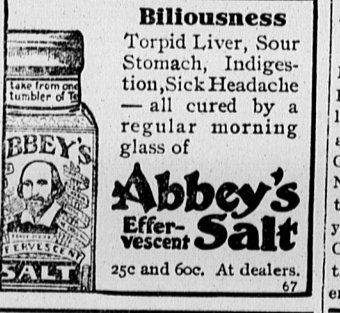
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