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The Mail - Fredericton, N. B.

LIBERAL PARTY WILL BE RETURNED TO POWER

A Review of the Political Situation—Will Sweep the Maritime Provinces and Carry at Least Sixty Seats in Quebec—The Outlook in Ontario Looks Brighter For the Party.

(Halifax Chronicle.)

There would not seem to be, nor do we believe that there is, much, if any, reasonable doubt in the public mind that the outcome of the coming general elections will be the return of the Liberal party to power with an adequate working majority, probably with a quite satisfactory working majority.

To begin with, that party has the assurance of at least sixty supporters from the Province of Quebec. It has fully as good, as if not better, fighting chances in Ontario against the United Farmers than the Government. The indications all are that it will practically sweep the Maritime Provinces. Quebec and these Provinces alone would not come far short of a yielding sufficient Liberal support in a House of 235 members. With what Ontario will, to a certain contribute, the formation of a Liberal Government is made as good as certain. We have not much definite information as yet concerning the Prairie Provinces, but there is every reason to believe that more Liberal than Conservative candidates will be elected. In British Columbia, in spite of its past Conservative record, the prospects are reported bright and constantly improving. So that, as we have just said, there is little or no reason to doubt that the Liberals will have a quite satisfactory working majority in the next Parliament.

While these things are believed by all to be true, it may be just as well to inform ourselves in advance as to what would, or might, follow, were no party or group to command a clear majority in the House of Commons after the elections. In the first place, the present Government would not be defeated in accordance with the theory of the Constitution. That is, it would not be imperative for the Prime Minister to place the resignation of himself and his colleagues at once in the hands of the Governor-General, at the same time naming his successor, as he would be expected to do in the event of the success of Mr. King and the Liberal party. Mr. Meighen might decide to hold office until Parliament should meet, and attempt, in the mean time, to strengthen his own political hands and those of his party by endeavoring to draw to his support any one or more of the groups represented, or individual members of them. This is a contingency which must not

be overlooked or forgotten, however great the unlikelihood of its arising. It is, in fact, a procedure which some Government organs are already suggesting, if not openly predicting.

Canadian precedents, were they required for the Government's continuance in power, if not actually defeated at the polls until an Opposition sufficiently strong to make its downfall in Parliament inevitable are to be found in the recent successive cases of Ontario and Manitoba. In Ontario, the Government, although not actually defeated in the general elections, was so reduced in support that it became at once apparent that it would not be able to carry on. Its regular opponents were similarly reduced and put out of the running for the taking over of government.

The United Farmers, although theirs was by far the largest group elected to the Legislature, had not a clear majority. It was the duty of the Government, in these circumstances, to continue in office, and it did so until the Prime Minister received the assurance of the leader of the Farmer group that he had made certain of sufficient legislative backing to justify him in assuming office. Then the Government retired, and the Farmers came in. They have since carried on the Government of the Provinces successfully, although, with the backing of Labor, they have a bare majority in the Legislature, and might be defeated at any time by a combination, however, which is little likely to take place.

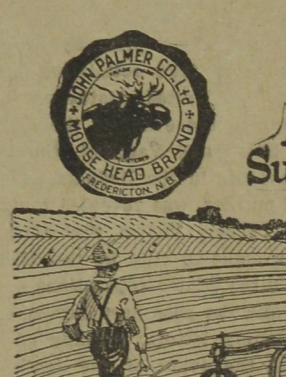
In Manitoba the Government came back from the country with the largest group of supporters in the Legislature, but without a majority or sufficient backing to enable it to effect legislation and conduct public affairs unless it could secure a guarantee of further regular support in the Legislature. A state of uncertainty continued for some time, but at last a tentative agreement was reached with the Farmers, which improved the position of the Government, and relieved them of the alternatives of resigning or making a second appeal to the electorate, in which, without such an understanding, they would inevitably have been defeated immediately by a combination of other groups. The Manitoba Government still continues in office on the strength of the agreement then made. But theirs is a doubtful and highly undesirable tenure of power, which can hardly fail to operate against public requirements and interests. Its repetition in the Federal House would not be tolerated.

However, it has to be recognized that electors have a perfect right to combine politically as they please, and the best possible has to be made of the present situation. There is one way, and apparently only one, in the Dominion by which stable party government, of the type which we have always known, can be maintained, and that is by the electors seeing to it, as we believe they will, that a substantial Liberal majority is returning to the next Parliament.

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Halifax Chronicle: At a meeting in one of the Conservative Ward Associations in Toronto the other night, Hon. Edmund Bristol, one of the new members of the Meighen Government, declared that there were three judgeships vacant in Ontario, and unless all three were given to Conservatives he would resign from the Government. Mr. Bristol is nothing if not frank and open-minded. He has unblushingly announced that judicial posts are to be regarded as a matter of patronage and spoils. It is not pleasant to have such an announcement made, yet it is useful as showing the calibre of some of the men whom Mr. Meighen has taken into his Government.



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