

Mr. R. B. Bennett's Manifest Talents Are Overlooked

Calgary M. P. Aspired to Cabinet Rank and Landed a Recruiting Job---His Partner Senator Lougheed Fared Much Better---R. B. May Decide to Lead the Forelorn Hope in Alberta---Some Reflections by Gadsby.

(By H. F. Gadsby.)

Ottawa, Oct. 19.—The latest news of R. B. Bennett, M. P., was that Premier Borden had made him recruiting director for Alberta, thus throwing a sop to the Calgary Statesman and staving off the day when he should be given full cabinet rank. The chances are that R. B. will serve for that cabinet job as long as Jacob did for Rachel.

Meanwhile, R. B.'s partner, Sir Jas. Lougheed, carries about all the honors the Borden government can hand out to one firm of lawyers.

It is this last thought, perhaps, which has turned R. B.'s longing eyes back to Alberta, where Leader Michener is full of that hope deferred which maketh the heart sick, and the Conservative party in the Local House is as sick of Leader Michener as Leader Michener is of the Conservative party. In the circumstances, R. B. Bennett as a new leader looks about as good to the Conservative party in Alberta as the Conservative party in Alberta looks to R. B. Bennett. It's Hobson's choice—Oh, to be nothing, nothing at Ottawa, or a little better than nothing at Edmonton. R. B. will probably decide in favor of the latter.

Wherever he looks for a general election—in the Dominion or in his beloved Alberta—the Calgary statesman sees himself on the losing side. There is no "aut Caesar aut nullus" about it. It's nullus for R. B. Bennett, whatever way he looks at it.

Five Years an M. P.

It is now five years since R. B. Bennett struck Ottawa and began to aspire—as a matter of fact he began to aspire from the first crack out of the box—he hasn't stopped aspiring yet, although he begins to see what a Sisyphean task it is—rolling his stone up hill all the time and never getting anywhere. When R. B. blew into the Green Chamber away back in 1911 he had an idea that all he had to do was to make a couple of his 250-words-a-minute

speeches and they would take him into the Cabinet right away on his merits. R. B. did this as many as half a dozen times, cutting loose with the tumbleweed of his rhetoric and also using the vox humana stop to the fullest extent, but it had no appreciable effect. It caused a stir in the galleries, the people not being accustomed to such celevritous verbiage as R. B. affects, but so far as the cabinet was concerned, R. B. might as well have been talking to a row of Stoughton bottles, Premier Borden being the Stoughtonest bottle of the lot.

In vain did R. B. use all his oratorical styles, including Chinook Wind, Camp Meeting Extra and Westminster Heavy. Merit remained unrecognized. Premier Borden continued to sit like a bump on a log. He didn't seem to know that a man named R. B. Bennett was alive, which was passing strange, because he apparently knew all about Mr. Lougheed and just where to look for him when he wanted to knight him. Truly, as Job says—or was it Jeremiah—one shall be taken and the other left—and the one that was left was R. B. Bennett.

A Hurricane Orator.

When R. B. woke up to this fact he ceased to aspire and began to conspire. He conspired with Jam Aikins, gave dinner parties and sought to inflame the Press Gallery with mysterious hints of insurgency.

The gentlemen of the press promised to make all the "copy" his insurgency was worth, but otherwise remained uninfluenced. Mr. Aikins soon realized that conspiring in public was an unprofitable pastime and got busy in other directions, with the result that he brought home the bacon. About a year ago he became a knight, which helped some, and only the other day he became Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, which crowns his career and completes his reward. Sir James Aikins conspired while the conspiring was

good, and then dropped it. He has no kick coming.

Honors are Light.

But R. B. Bennett, who is neither a knight nor a lieutenant governor, but only a recruiting director, with no salary, no gold braid and no white satin pants, may well gird at an ungrateful government which overlooks his manifest talents. He may well gird, I repeat. In fact there is no better or stronger girder in the right thing to do, but this is apparently a case where girding is bad play. R. B. still hopes, but not much. No doubt his idea is to stand right up to the last straw and then sink his teeth in his persecutors.

Like the man who was kicked down stairs three times, R. B. is beginning to suspect that they don't want him in there. This is not as hard luck as R. B. imagines, because the Borden government's Belshazzaring is in sight of its finish. But R. B. naturally feels sore about it—his conceit is more hurt than his prospects. If he were taken into the cabinet this month it would be only to go out again with the rest of his colleagues next summer—not long enough to warm his feet. But he would like to go back to Calgary and say: "There, I did it." A harmless ambition in which he is thwarted by a doltish government. Off again, on again, gone again, Finnegan—R. B. can't even say that. The best they can do for him is to make him recruiting director, which is an honorary position, like a hen hatching a door-knob.

Had to Work Up.

Of course R. B. didn't reach this giddy height at one jump. The position of director of recruiting is not attained by sudden thought. One has to work up to it. A man rises to it on stepping stones of his dead self. For example, R. B. had to winnow his eloquence, thresh the hot air out of it, before he qualified. To vary the metaphor he was crude oil when he came to

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