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# The Daily News

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## EARLY MORNING BLAZE IN INTERIOR TOWN

### QUESTION REGARDING DOMINION'S AUTONOMY BEING DISCUSSED OTTAWA

#### Part of Business Section of Smithers Wiped Out by Fire Which Started During Night

##### Occupants of Buildings Escaped but Personal Effects Destroyed; Chemical Wagons Were Helpless

(Special to Daily News)  
SMITHERS, Feb. 19.—A disastrous fire occurred here shortly after midnight resulting in the wiping out of a portion of the business section of Smithers. The Fotherby ladies' wear store, the police station and the office of the land settlement board all went up in smoke and little was saved. Fortunately no lives were lost and the spread of the fire to other buildings in the neighborhood was prevented but only after the occupants had received a severe fright and strenuous efforts had been made to save them.

#### OLD ELECTION SCANDAL HAS BEEN REVIVED

##### T. R. Preston Replies in England to Allegations of Canadian M.P.

LONDON, Feb. 19.—W. T. R. Preston has sent a letter to the Daily Mail with respect to the charges reflecting "on my personal honor" made in the House of Commons at Ottawa by Donald Sutherland, M.P. for Oxford South, who characterized Preston as "a barnacle on the ship state." Preston says that the inquiry into the West Kent by-election twenty-five years ago involved him from the remotest connection with alleged frauds. Also the correspondence quoted by Sutherland is a forgery," he says.

#### BRITISH AIR FORCE RAISE

##### Expenditure of £21,319,300 Will be Asked—Increase in Personnel is Proposed

LONDON, Feb. 19.—Parliament will be asked to sanction the expenditure of £21,319,300 for the maintenance and expansion of the Air Force. This is an increase of nearly £2,000,000 over last year. Sir Samuel Hoare, air secretary, announced. He insisted that the personnel be increased to 36,000. Home defence squadrons, he proposes, to increase to 25,000.

#### HALIBUT IS SOLD TODAY AT EXCHANGE FIRST OF SEASON

##### Cape Spencer Broke Crank Shaft and Had to be Towed Home

The first halibut catches of the season were sold today at the exchange and fetched seven and ten cents respectively, the buyers being Alfin Fisheries and the Gold Storage.  
The Cape Spencer broke her crank shaft and had to come in so she was towed from Rose Spit by the Fisher. The catches were: Fisher, 4,500, to Alfin Fisheries at 17c and 10 1/2c.  
Cape Spencer, 800, to Gold Storage at 17c and 10c.

#### WAYNE MUNN COMING CHAMP?

CHICAGO, Feb. 19.—Wayne Munn, the sensational new wrestler, lifted huge Mike Romano with a crotch and half-Nelson and smashed him to the mat twice in less than seven minutes last night. Romano had lost three contests to Strangler Lewis the champion, only after hours of gruelling mat work.

#### PRINCE RUPERT WILL BENEFIT VERY LARGELY

##### New Rates Assured Which Will Turn Grain Stream Toward Pacific

#### OLIVER'S GOOD WORK

##### Co-operation at Ottawa and Support of Western Members Made Possible Rate Revision

(Special to Daily News)  
OTTAWA, Feb. 19.—It is definitely announced that British Columbia, through the strenuous efforts of John Oliver and his Government and with the sympathetic co-operation of W. L. Mackenzie King and his cabinet, has won its rate war fight and that the rates on grain shipments to the Pacific Coast will be equal, mile for mile, with those Eastbound.  
G. G. McGeer has been employed by the Oliver government to follow up the campaign and with the backing of the B.C. government and the western members of Parliament has eventually won out. Legislation will be introduced at this session to bring the new rates into force.

#### West to Benefit

The Pacific Coast ports will benefit very materially from this change. Vancouver and Prince Rupert and possibly New Westminster and Victoria will handle grain from Saskatchewan as well as Alberta, the natural divide between east and west being in the neighborhood of the Saskatchewan-Alberta boundary. All new immigration development in the west will therefore benefit the Pacific ports, as the product will go out that way.

The opinion here is that Prince Rupert will become one of the big outlets on the Pacific. There will be plenty of grain to keep all ports busy and much of it is bound to take the northern route. The placing of the half million dollars in the estimates for the grain elevator is drawing attention to that port and news of activities there are filtering through the regular news channels.

Mrs. McAllister left on last night's train for Edmonton en route to Calgary.



Workmen are filling the cracks in the dome of the new St. Paul's Cathedral, London, with compressed cement in their effort to save the towering edifice that has overlooked the city for so many years.

#### Propose Giving Power to Canada to Amend Her Own Constitution

##### Matter Introduced by Conservative Member of Parliament is Opposed by French-Canadian Minister

OTTAWA, Feb. 19.—Should the Canadian Parliament have the right to amend the British North America Act? This question held the House of Commons yesterday when W. F. MacLean, Conservative member for South York, submitted a motion that Parliament should be given such power instead of amendments coming by way of the British Parliament as at present.

Mr. MacLean urged that Canada should have the same right to amend her own constitution as had South Africa, Australia or the Irish Free State.

#### SAWMILL HEAD HERE

J. A. Smith, who recently purchased the Seal Cove sawmill here, arrived from Vancouver on the Prince Rupert yesterday afternoon. He is inspecting the work of renovating the plant which is now in progress and expects to be here for a week or ten days. He is staying at the mill boarding house.

There are at present 26 men on the payroll at Seal Cove, all of them engaged in the work of getting the plant ready for a resumption of operations. It is expected that sawing will start in about six weeks time.

#### Religious Frenzy Roused Eskimos to Pitch of Excitement Bordering on Insanity and Killings Resulted

OTTAWA, Feb. 19.—Two murders followed by a killing to defend a woman are parts of a tale of fantastic horror made public when the Royal Canadian Mounted Police report was tabled yesterday.

Fired with the idea that he was Jesus Christ, Neakoteah, an Eskimo head man of Little Horn Bay village, raised the whole community to a pitch of religious excitement bordering on insanity.

The first man murdered was a blind man whom Neakoteah ordered stabbed after he had failed to restore his sight. The second victim was wounded and slowly froze to death. The third was shot when he was about to strike a woman with a hammer.

#### Work Begins on Construction of Elevator Here with Arrival Equipment, Dredge and Scows

Several tons of general hardware for the work having arrived from Vancouver on the steamer Prince Rupert yesterday afternoon, the Northern Construction Co. started excavation today for the elevator foundations. This marks the actual commencement of work on this long awaited port facility which it is expected will mean so much in the future progress of Prince Rupert.

That no time is to be lost in meeting the intention of the Department of Trade and Commerce to have the elevator here ready to handle the 1925 grain crop this fall is indicated by the fact that two shifts are to be faced on the foundation work which will be rushed through so that the main superstructure work, the contract for which will be let in the near future, will not be delayed in starting.

#### KING METHOD OF BUSINESS

##### Will Not Place Export Tax on Wheat But Will Encourage Shipping

OTTAWA, Feb. 19.—The Mackenzie King government proposes to develop Canadian ports by encouraging Canadian shipping rather than by restricting the export of Canadian products. They will not take the recommendations contained in the Tunge report and place an export duty on wheat. Instead of that they are taking steps to break the Atlantic shipping combine and at the same time encourage grain and other shipments from Canadian ports, both in the East and West. Legislation will soon be introduced to make this possible.

#### SPEED CRAZY DRIVERS MUST GET A SHOCK

##### So Says Police Inspector at Vancouver in Renard to Law Breakers

VANCOUVER, Feb. 19.—Speed-crazy drivers, thinking the absence of a speed limit in British Columbia means a license to go as fast as they like, will get a shock presently, declared Inspector Hood of the police traffic department, issuing a warning as a result of an epidemic of automobile crashes last week.

#### HUGE LOAN BY FRANCE MOOTED

##### Finance Minister Clementel Advances Solution For Country's Economic Problems

PARIS, Feb. 19.—The promise of a \$100,000,000 loan for improvement of French finances and another of \$35,000,000 for devastated regions to be floated in United States as soon as the budget is definitely balanced and voted is the remedy for France's economic troubles advanced by Finance Minister Clementel in the chamber of deputies. Details and terms are not given.

#### NEWSPAPER WAR IS APPARENTLY OVER

##### Vancouver Sun Gives up Price Cutting Fight and Raises Rate

The newspaper fight seems about over in Vancouver. The Star triumphantly announces that the Sun has ceased its efforts to put its smaller rival out of business. It has raised its subscription rates but keeps its street sale price down to one cent. At present the Province sells for five cents, the Sun and Star each for one cent.

#### HEALTH OF KING IS SLOWLY IMPROVING

##### ROSS WATSON SENT TO OKALLA WHILE AWAITING HIS TRIAL

VANCOUVER, Feb. 19.—Ross Watson, wanted in connection with the robbery of the bank at Nanaimo, was brought here last night from Victoria and lodged at Okalla to await the preliminary hearing at Nanaimo eight days hence.

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