GOVERNMENT POLICY REVIEWED.

BEING A

SERIES OF ARTICLES

—ON—

THE POLITICAL SITUATION

IN THIS PROVINCE,

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A POLITICAL REVIEW.

The Conditions which Entered Into the Administration of the Affairs of the Province.

Effect upon the Development during Recent Years —True Standard of Success.

No. 1.

In reviewing the policy of a government extending over a period of years, we must take into account all the conditions which have effected the country during such time. The success or failure of an administration must be judged not so much according to any fixed standard of policy, as according to the degree of conformity with conditions as they present themselves.

Systems everywhere depend upon the individual character and ability of men entrusted with their carrying out. This has been strikingly illustrated so often in history that examples are unnecessary. If we take, for instance, the relations of France and Great Britain with their American colonies, extending over a period during which New France and New England formed the major divisions of the North American continent, we find that events shaped themselves very largely as the home authorities understood and acted upon Colonial needs. Under the enlightened policy of Colbert, New France grew and prospered. When the fatuous influence of Madame Pompadour ruled the French Court, it famished instead of flourishing. The wise and vigorous policy of Pitt strengthened and extended British power in America, while the "crass" policy of North proved as disastrous as the administration of Pitt had been successful.

The secret of success in every instance was the adaptation of policy to the demands of the times as conditions were developed and were varied.

Coming to British Columbia, the history of the Province since confederation is divided into two distinct periods, the one prior and the other subsequent to the construction of the C.P.R. The former period was governed by conditions materially different from those existing now. Without railway communication progress was necessarily very slow, and Government was confined to a narrow groove. In a long wait for the anticipated new order of things it settled down to one main consideration, viz: the equilibrium of revenue and expenditure. With a limited population and limited trade and industry, revenue depended to a large extent upon Dominion subsidies and land sales. Out of this state of affairs grew the British Columbia land policy, or in other words, the selling of lands in large tracts. For this "evil," the Government as a whole, dating it back to

the first, has been roundly condemned by those who are wise in their day and generation, and who talk glibly about what now appears, without consideration of the past.

ORIGIN OF LAND SALES.

Doubtless if the government had all these lands now and could sell them to settlers for settlement purposes only the country would be much better off. This is easy to say by men who came here in prosperous latter days and who are oblivious of all that is gone before, but when we consider that upon land sales for many years the government had to depend for revenue, and that at a time too when it could offer few inducements for settlement, we see that such a policy was unavoidable, there was only one other course to pursue in order to provide ordinary revenue, and that was to borrow money. That would have been unwise, even had it been practicable; but it was not practicable. British Columbia had up to very recently no borrowing status, and the few loans it did effect were obtained at high rates of interest, which stood until very lately a disadvantage to the Province, necessitating the process of conversion, about which we have heard so much, in order to obtain a financial rating in the money market. To this conversion and consolidation of our debt is largely due the fact that our securities are second in the colonial list and our 3 per cents have sold at 92.

It may be, that the men who purchased the lands in the early days were speculators, but they were purchasers when there were few settlers and could be but few until railways were built. These lands when sold became revenue producing and have been so ever since. The policy by which this was possible may have been a mistake, but it was one which all Governments had to pursue in British Columbia. It was the policy which the present leader of the Opposition had to pursue when in the Government. There are times when Governments, like individuals, have to choose between evils, and the choice in this Province was between selling lands or stagnation. The men who bought did so to hold in order to realize when railways would bring population and capital. It was a speculation founded on strong faith in the future and involved more risk than many would undertake now. For many of the purchasers it proved a long and tedious wait and eventually a terrible disappointment, and it is a question of to-day if the Province did not make a much better bargain than those same speculators. Further than that there is not to-day a member of the Opposition who is or was avowedly opposed to the land policy of the Government who has not participated as far as his means would permit, and in many instances much farther, in the opportunities which the policy afforded. We call it "policy," but it was really a necessity.

THE OLD AND THE NEW.

We are now comparing two eras, that antedating the C.P.R. and the present, which may be designated as the old and the new. In the old regime the main desideratum of governing was that of making ends meet while waiting for the era of development to arrive. The two problems which the legislative pioneers of British Columbia had attempted and successfully mastered were confederation and railway negotiations. They paved the way for great things, and until they bore their legitimate fruits the Province, with its limited sources of income, had to rest on its oars. It was obliged to live on its capital in the meantime. That capital was its public lands.

No other province in Canada and perhaps no country in the world, with so many drawbacks, has succeeded so well, and all honor is due to those pioneer statesmen that they laid the foundations of a commonwealth so surely and well preserved the balances of revenue and expenditure and kept out of debt. Judged by the standard of practical government, they fully understood the needs and opportunities of their province and adapted their measures to

the conditions as they found them and as they were likely to develop.

With the completion of the C. P. R. came what was practically a new era, and a new population with aims, it is true, somewhat similar that was to make a fortune in a new country, but with a set of ideas moulded under conditions of old and settled communities. There was at once the commingling of the old and the new, and it would be strange if perfect harmony should prevail and assimilation be complete. The newer and more aggressive element demanded much and the transition was necessarily attended by some conflict of ideas.

A BASIS OF JUDGMENT.

Henceforward the policy of the Government was not to be a waiting or inactive one, but one of development in line with the opening up of the country, the result of railway communication, and the present administration, which is the legitimate successor of the Government then in power, is to be judged by the methods pursued in grappling with the problems presenting themselves. If it can be shown that it has failed to comprehend the needs of the country, to understand the altered requirements of a new order of things and to adapt its measures and its methods so as to ensure progress and the development of great natural resources, then it is for the electors to consider whether the reins of power should not be entrusted to another set of men, who, though untried and whose capacity for government is an unknown quantity, promise to do better. If, on the other hand, it can be shown that the present Government has kept fully abreast and well in advance of the requirements of the Province, that its administration has been coincident with progress on every hand, that the population has largely increased, the revenue expanded, the credit of the Province been raised to a high rank compared with that of other provinces and countries, that railway and mining development has been substantial and rapid, that extraordinary educational facilities have been provided, that social and industrial rights have been carefully guarded, that our political institutions are free and untrammelled, and the moral and political tone of the country is pure and healthy, then it is clear that it is worthy of the confidence of the country, and it is the bounden duty of the electorate, making due allowance for what is human and fallible in all governments, to return it to power.

THE PROBLEMS OF GOVERNMENT.

Condition of the Country Seven Years Ago as Compared with its Present Status.

The Government Entitled to Credit for a Policy of Wise Expenditure in Development.

No. 2.

We have drawn the broad line of demarcation between the old and new regimes in British Columbia at the time of the completion of the C.P.R , and we may, therefore, take 1887 as the starting point of the new era of development in this Province.

The Government of the day was confronted with a series of important problems forced on it by conditions somewhat new and yet all the physical difficulties to surmount which a country of vast extent, rugged exterior and rich but varied and widely distributed resource could present, were present.

First of all, to use a mining metaphor, it was an extensive claim, very inaccessible, into which the main tunnel of the C.P.R. had been run. There were development works to establish, numerous shafts to sink and many cross cuts and drifts to make. Then there were the social, educational and political needs of a large body of workers to look after, all necessitating much energy, large administrative ability and immense expenditure. It was an undertaking fraught with many difficulties and great responsibilities. We have now arrived at a period of stock-taking and general reckoning up, when the directorate has to render an account of its stewardship to the stockholders. A balance sheet has now to be presented prior to the election of officers. Have results justified renewed confidence in and the re-election of the management? That is, we take it, the question now to decide.

THE COUNTRY AS IT WAS.

Throwing metaphor aside, let us look at the country at that time. Practically speaking, there was no city of Vancouver, or at least was not a year or two previous. Burrard Inlet was surrounded by forest. Westminster was a small town. The Westminster district, with the exception of a few settled tracts, was populated by straggling settlers and intersected but by one main trunk road. The glory of Cariboo was departing. Lillooet and Yale had cattle ranches at long intervals, and a few incipient mining camps, rich in prospect but circumscribed by lack of opportunity. Kamloops was the one town of the interior, a trading post. The rich valleys of the Okanagan were yet regions for discovery and were but little known, and travellers wondered at what they saw and were interviewed as one might now be returning from the Peace river country. Their possibilities were little under-

stood, or at least by few. At most there was but a general notion of their possible importance. The great triangular district of Kootenay was a lone land, a wilderness, accessible only over long, circuitous mountain trails and inland water stretches by canoe. It was regarded as a mineralized area of indefinite value, about which some curiosity had been excited owing to the tales of prospectors, but the rich argentiferous lodes that have since been disclosed were then not dreamed of.

Going north the great Chilcotin plateau, yet isolated, with its millions of acres of fertile valleys, had only been traversed by explorers seeking gold or a possible railway route. In fact, what was known about the greater part of British Columbia at the time to which we refer, was little more than was known many years before, through traders, prospectors and explorers, and the greater part of our knowledge was referrable to notes of those infrequent travellers. We are speaking now of the ken of the general public, and this will scarcely be denied. Individually, many of the old British Columbians had travelled over a good deal of the Province, and to these intrepid pioneers we are indebted for a great deal of our present knowledge.

Such a description in outline of a Province might read as a story of long ago, but when it applies to a period compassed within a decade, it emphasizes what people engrossed with current events forget about the accomplishments of a few years, what politicians of a day, ephemeral seekers after notoriety, seek to ignore, beclouding public issues with the by-play of a single session of Parliament, for that is what it amounts to. If electors were to be deceived by representations such as these gentlemen place before them, they would commit the blunder of generals who burned bridges that had safely carried their armies across and then found themselves a prey to the enemy.

THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF TO DAY.

"For my monument, look around you," was the simple inscription placed on the commemorative tablet in honor of the architect Wren, whose remains rested beneath the great monumental pile, the creation of his own genius. To note what has been accomplished during the last seven or eight years in British Columbia we have simply to look around us. We are not so foolish as to say that the present Government did all this. Progress in this Province was due to a combination of circumstances, ulterior as well as internal. Governments in these matters are only entitled to credit to the extent to which their efforts contribute to advancement. But as we pointed out in a previous article, results are very largely influenced by the policy of the men in power, whereby opportunities are taken advantage of or disregarded as the case may be.

It is true that British Columbia is to-day suffering a severe depression in common with the world, but that her lot is not so bad as that of many other countries is because, as was the case of the Dominion as a whole, her policy while liberal and progressive, has been careful and conservative, and thus the credit of the Province has been conserved. The extremes in this matter are well exemplified in the United States, the South American Republic and the Australian Colonies, where complete collapse has been brought about by reckless expenditure of public monies on public works and in many other ways.

But while revenue has been expanding, trade increasing, assessed value doubling up and credit strengthening, if the Government is not to be credited with some share of the praise due to such a state of affairs, at least the cry that the country is going to the dogs, as the result of misgovernment, cannot be accepted except as a political calumny perpetrated by men who for selfish purposes have placed party ends above patriotism.

"THE POLICY OF APPROPRIATIONS."

Of late an endeavor has been made to offset the apparent effects of expenditure in development works, in roads and bridges, in

public buildings, to meet the requirements of the various growing communities, in educational facilities and the like, by the hue and cry that the appropriations for these purposes are attempts to bribe the electors with their own money. Of course, this is a hackneyed expression which has been worn threadbare in many a political contest the world over, and for which the opposition are no more entitled to originality of thought than the parrot is which glibly screams in every quarter of the Anglicised globe, "Polly wants a cracker."

Take Vancouver, where such a large amount of money was required for educational purposes and for public buildings, did Mr. Cotton ever raise his voice in parliament and say that his city was not entitled to it? and that the money should not have been spent? Did Mr. Brown oppose a subsidy to the bridge over the Fraser at New Westminster? Did he say it was a wrong thing to bribe the people with their own money in this way? Did Mr. Semlin object to the moneys spent in Yale? Do the people in Kootenay say that the expenditure there was in excess of their requirements for trails, wagon roads and railways? Have Messrs. McKenzie and Keith complained that Nanaimo and district got more than it was entitled to and the improvement was lavishly buying up support there? Examine their whole contention and you will find that the details of their charges are lacking, and their speech is in the generalities in which demagogues the world over love to declaim. It has, however, been charged that the Government wasted money voted for specific purposes, that it has been frittered away. This was a favorite theme and especially did Mr. Beaven, Mr. Brown and Mr. Kitchen love to dwell upon it. Now, then, we are pleased to come down to particulars and challenge the Opposition to show where in this Province for the last seven years the Government has spent more in any important respect on any particular public service than was required of it. The campaign is still young and the Opposition has ample opportunity to prove its case. The challenge is broad enough in all conscience.

We half suspect, however, what the Opposition have been driving at, although they have never had the courage to put it in that way. What they desire to say is that had the various minor works on roads and trails, etc., been let out at contract by tender instead of by day labor there would have been a great saving. There is no other conclusion to be arrived at. This may or may not be true. The question is, which is the proper principle to adopt, contract or day labor? Have the Opposition ever formulated the policy in the House that the principle of day labor in carrying out these public works was a wrong one, that every job should be let by contract to the lowest tenderer? The issue then resolves itself into this: Did the Government pay too much wages for the work that was done? It devolves upon those who say otherwise to advance the proof. Members of the present Government assert that they have been the true friends of the workingman. We think it is easy to demonstrate how in a variety of ways this is true, and we are willing to rest the verdict in this particular matter upon whether day labor is or is not an essential plank in the policy of workingmen's organizations the world over.

A STRIKING EXAMPLE.

Expenditure on Works of Development has Made Canada Great.

British Columbia's Progress Must be on the Lines of the Dominion.

No. 3.

The Government of Canada lent to the Grand Trunk something over $15,000,000, which with interest now amounts to over $25,000,000, the Intercolonial Railway cost about $55,000,000, the Prince Edward Island about $3,750,000, the Canadian Pacific and Branches about $63,500,000, the Canada Central about $1,525,000, other railways about $7,000,000; which up to end of 1892 amounted to $155,775,000; the Canals have cost over $70,000,000; Public Works $50,000,000, total $275,775,000. Of this sum $190,000,000 is credited or rather debited to Capital account since Confederation.

When we add to this vast sum what was spent for steamship subsidies and in other ways intended to develop the latent resources of half a continent and for the purpose, as one writer expressed it, of overcoming the physical barriers to communication and of welding a series of disconnected provinces into a compact whole, we can best appreciate the wisdom of a policy of expenditure which, though it brought the gross debt of Canada from $93,000,000 in 1867, to $295,000,000 in 1892, and the net debt from $76,000,000 to $241,000,000 in the same time, or in other words was trebled in twenty-five years; on the other hand it trebled the assets, and advanced the credit of the country, so that while the debt trebled the amount of interest only about doubled and the net rate of interest was reduced from 4.51 to 2.93.

THE LEGITIMATE CONSEQUENCES.

The consequence of this was an expansion of trade, which, for its steady and substantial character, is unrivalled by comparison. The total trade in 1867 was $130,000,000, in 1892 it was $240,000,000, and to-day the trade of Canada has overtopped its record and this despite the fact that universal depression has reigned for a recent period during which the trade of nearly every other country has seriously diminished.

Revenue rose from $14,000,000 in 1868 to $37,000,000 in 1892.

Canada in that time has spanned the

continent with a railway and provided a net-work of railways for the people. She has created the most gigantic system of canals in the world; and she has established steamship lines, diverting trade of the world through her territory and opening up vast possibilities for her future in this respect.

All of this has been accomplished as the result of a wise and statesmanlike and far-seeing policy of public expenditure. Canada has sown liberally that she might reap plentifully.

Her public debt, now that she has practically completed those great public works of necessity, has reached a point of equilibrium from which it will recede, while her sources of revenue will expand more and more rapidly as the problem of development works itself out more and more fully.

THE MORAL APPLIED TO B. C.

The circumstances which affected Canada in a large way affect British Columbia in a proportionately smaller way, only that the physical conditions—of natural barriers to development—are more pronounced in the latter case. British Columbia has, comparatively speaking, a harder problem of success to solve, and therefore the moral of the conditions and events out of which were evolved great results in Canada, applies with greater force in this Province.

In proportion to our means and populations, British Colnmbia has a greater task in order to meet the requirements of development than Canada had. The extensive area of country, the long distances intervening between settlements, the rugged exterior of the Province and the many other well known obstacles to surmount in the way of communication, all render the expenditure of large sums of money absolutely necessary to effect the desired ends—settlement, intercommunication and development of industry. If it were not known that the Province was abundant in resources from end to end, the Government would not be justified in entering upon a policy of opening it up. But, our great, varied riches conceded, to reach and develop them, we must have railways, roads, bridges, schools and all other facilities which modern requirements demand.

We must stop or go ahead.

To go ahead means money.

WE WANT RAILWAYS.

Above all the necessity of this new country is railways. In a country where railway construction is difficult, population small, home trade limited, and returns largely in the future, capital will not unaided undertake what we have not sufficient faith to undertake ourselves. In no country has investment in railways proved fairly remunerative. Experience extending over a number of years has proved this. Only India and Germany, with dense populations, can earn over 5 per cent. in capital, the average being $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. There are thirteen countries earning over the average and eleven less than the average. What, then, may be expected in British Columbia? In the United Kingdom the interest on railway capital has varied in thirty-five years from 3.7 per cent. to 4.1 per cent., and that with a population of 35,000,000.

There is only one course open in order to secure and advance railways, and that is to assume burdens of debt and look for indirect returns in the increase of revenue and population.

From all parts of the Province come demands for expenditure in every form. No member of Parliament, Opposition or supporter, has ever opposed the Government for expenditure in his own district.

On the other hand, each representative has complained that his particular district has been unjustly dealt with.

Yet, when the aggregate of expenditure comes to be considered, those in Opposition assert that the country is going to the dogs because revenue does not keep pace with expenditure.

No one with reason and common sense can maintain that at the present stage such a thing is possible. The Government borrowed money with the assent of Parliament, and the country depends on works of development. That money has been expended and is being expended for the purposes for which it was voted and intended and the country is benefiting by it.

WE WITNESS THE RESULTS.

We have the direct and unmistakable results of it in two particular instances. Take West Kootenay and Yale. Five years ago West Kootenay was a wilderness, when Nelson and Kaslo and all the rest of the aspiring towns there were unknown and unthought of. There was practically no communication into it. To-day we find six or seven well established lines of communication, with several more immediately in prospect. We find a number of budding and promising towns and a rapidly growing and sturdy population of about 10,000, numerous mining camps, large quantities of ore being shipped and all the evidences of a growing community, with prospects of being second to none in importance in the Province. Such progress is phenomenal even in the West, and was not possible without large expenditures from the Provincial Treasury, which is reaping in return substantial revenues from that district. Had the Government stopped to consider the balancing of revenue and expenditure West Kootenay would have been, comparatively speaking, a wilderness to-day.

In Yale we find a similar illustration of this policy of expenditure. Without the Shuswap & Okanagan railway it would have been still entered by stage coaches. As it is, the people of British Columbia point with pride to the valley of the Okanagan, just now through railway and steamboat facilities entering upon a period of great development.

When we consider the stimulating effects of railways in these districts and in regard to Vancouver, Victoria, Westminster and Nanaimo during the past five or six years, we may easily judge of what the projected enterprises in regard to Chilliwack, Delta, Nicola, Cariboo, and so on, will produce.

The Government, of course, cannot proceed to do everything at once. It has evidenced the willingness to do all it can and as fast as it can. There is the mean between undue and lavish expenditure and parsimony to observe, and this it has carefully endeavored to do.

THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE COUNTRY.

There have been besides railways and roads and bridges to build many other wants to take into consideration, judicial administration, hospitals, asylums and the promotion of the agricultural interests in various ways, mining, etc., and the administration of public service, besides the duty of educating the young, in which the Province has expended very large amounts.

The conservation, protection and promotion of all these interests the Government has endeavored to consider and still keep the revenue and expenditure within reasonable bounds. With all this the debt has not much exceeded the limits of that of one or two of the leading cities of the Province.

If the Government and the people have faith in the future of this Province, they

must stake on its future. It must follow out a liberal and judicious policy of development and trust to the results of such a policy in making the Province richer and greater in return. We are all here because we are sanguine of the future. If we do not believe that what is necessary to accomplish our hopes is feasible and possible, then we had better organize a general exodus.

If the people of the Province are not to be inspired by the example and success of the Dominion in carrying out the greatest system of public works in proportion to the population the world ever knew, and in the face of tremendous financial and physical difficulties, then there is but one of two conclusions to arrive at : either that the Province is not worthy of the effort or that the people are not worthy of the Province.

A HELPING HAND.

How the Era of Hard Times has been Tided Over and Depression Relieved

By Expenditure in Needed Public Works—Bright Prospects of Immediate Revival.

No. 4.

We have indicated some of the conditions which affected the development of this Province. We have shown, and it is contended very conclusively, that the policy pursued was in harmony with the expanding elements in our Provincial growth and the only successful policy possible to pursue.

Looking over the controversial issues of politics for the past seven or eight years, we find that until very recently the Government of British Columbia has been blamed more particularly for not going ahead fast enough. Its course has been described by those now seeking to take the lead in public affairs as "tardy." It has been even designated as the representative of "Mossbackism."

Now, however, since the tide of speculation has been turned or held back, and we have been swept by the tail end of the comet of hard times, the "evil" influences of which have been severely felt in nearly every country in the world, we find these aspiring politicians endeavoring to get astride of the same comet's tail and swing into power, crying that the Government have been too lavish and are bankrupting the Province. The endeavors of such men who, professing to be in favor of development, condemn the spending of money, would indicate some policy of nebulous inflation whereby by a paper fiat they would create money and capital to build up a country without pledging the country's credit for it. Their position is anomalous and preposterous.

LIBERAL WHILE CONSERVATIVE.

The truth is, the Government of British Columbia has been liberal, while conservative. It has made mistakes. What Government has not? Even the "heaven-born financier" who rules the editorial columns of the News-Advertiser, and aspires to be the next Premier, will admit the possibility of even the greatest of men, among whom he modestly classes himself, making mistakes. The Government has spent money where it deemed it necessary, and held back where the

burdens of the Province would have been unduly increased. Had it listened to all the demands for expenditure from all quarters, it would have truly bankrupted its resources. Now that hard times are upon us, and the necessity for retrenchment in every line of business is necessary, the wisdom of conservatism in public undertakings in the past is apparent. The result is that while business men have been hauling in sail on all sides, the Government, with unimpaired credit, is able to go ahead, and thus materially ease the financial stringency by carrying on needful public works. During the past two years had it not been for these public works the suffering experienced would have been greatly augmented.

THE RESULTS OF EXCESS.

The results of a contrary policy have been strikingly illustrated in the United States, Australia and South America. While times were good the Government in those countries spent money lavishly. When depression set in, their financial resources and credit being crippled, the cessation of payments brought about a general collapse, and the Governments were unable to lend a helping hand, having already depleted their reserve forces. At the close of the fiscal year, ending June 30, 1893, there was a deficit of $44,888,296. This gave a monthly deficit of $6,412,830. If the expenditure goes on exceeding the revenue at this rate to the end of June, there will be a deficit of over $72,000,000. The spectacle of Coxey's army marching on to Washington is unique in history, and exemplifies a condition of affairs brought about by disregard of the lessons of history and the principles of stable government. Coxey's army may be, and undoubtedly is, a "crank" movement, doomed to dismal failure except as a finger-post in United States history and a monument to hard times, but it is a legitimate political product. The Argentine Republic failures were the beginning of the great monetary depression. The Australian collapse set it in full tide, and the American so-called "silver question" was its culmination.

STEMMED THE TIDE OF DEPRESSION.

These things all reacted on British Columbia, depending as it did largely on foreign capital, and a very marked progress has been temporarily checked; but the remarkable fact is here to be noted that British Columbia, outside of the Dominion of Canada, South Africa and New Zealand, is about the only Province or country—to speak of it in that respect—which has been able during a period of extreme depression to carry on public works in a greater degree even than before, without impairing its credit or straining its finances. Since the completion of the C.P.R. there has never been such activity in railway construction or so many public works of benefit and necessity as at present in progress, or within the past two years.

The wisdom of the Government has been shown in not having lost its head during good times, and being able during bad times to carry on uninterruptedly a system of wise expenditure. It is during such times as these, when the ordinary avenues of expenditure for private and business purposes are closed up and economies everywhere are effected, that a wise and liberal policy of expenditure is necessary to offset the hardships of labor and tide over the financial difficulties oppressing rich and poor alike. It is not in our case either, as it was in the Province of Quebec, when the Government set the unemployed at work in the old capitol to

pull down the walls and build them up again in order to supply work. We have unfortunately our unemployed, but in one way or other we have been able to provide them with means of subsistence without resort in any important degree to charity methods. The works carried on by the Province now and in the past have been necessary and useful works, such as would have been justified at any time and all the more welcome now.

It was Sir Leonard Tilley we think who, after inaugurating the National Policy, advised the people of Canada to clap on all sail for the next seven years, because in the cycle of events hard times would come again. His prescience probably was better than his advice. During the boom times our Government did not clap on all sail, but on the other hand, it was said, was over conservative and slow. Had it done so we would not to-day have been in the position to branch out in expenditure when most needed.

SIGNS OF RETURNING PROSPERITY.

Already we see the unmistakable signs of a return of great prosperity in this Province. For some years the lumber industry, which has struggled along against heavy odds, is reviving. The Hastings Mills, one of the leading export mills in the Province, has already charters ahead sufficient to keep it employed for the rest of the year and is now in full blast. Victoria, for the first time in its history, is loading lumber for foreign markets. Other mills are starting up and the prospec s are excellent.

Kootenay has millions of dollars worth of ore in sight, and the Nelson Tribune, we think it was, prophesied that $12,000,000 worth of silver would go out in 1894. By the end of the year it will have three systems of railway, tapping its marvellously rich metalliferous lodes.

One of the largest hydraulic mining propositions in America is materializing in Cariboo, where half a million dollars is being spent by one company, who look for $1,000,000 as the first season's clean-up. On the Fraser, on the Thompson, in the Big Bend country and in many other places, the greatest activity in hydraulicing is being shown, with prospects of an abundant return.

Another good season in canning salmon is anticipated, and as a successful inauguration of the deep sea fishing has been accomplished, we may look for a steady development of this most important of our resources. In finding a market for our halibut, our fresh salmon and cured fishes of all kinds, the gordian knot has been cut and henceforward the export of fish will be a large one.

There was never a time either in which so much interest has been manifested in our agricultural interests, and now that the element of speculative real estate values has been eliminated, farming seems to have started on a course of legitimate development that cannot but have an important effect in building up the country and making it rich ; because any country or Province without the backbone of agriculture must be for all time handicapped in the import of the necessaries of life which that industry affords.

With the improvement on freight rates the competition in British and Australian coals will be less keenly felt, and consequently increased demand for British Columbia coal in the American market, which means a substantial revival in that industry, now suffering from a glut in the Coast cities.

TAKING TIME BY THE FORELOCK.

In all these respects the outlook is more promising than it ever has been before. There is the promise of legitimate

industries on a large scale taking the place of propositions on paper, which in too many instances have failed to answer the expectations of either the promoter or investor. In all these respects, too, the Government has lent a helping hand and given every assistance possible.

The beneficent result of a policy of expenditure in development are being shown and will appear more fully from year to year. The Government did not wait for lumber to get better in price, or mines to be developed, or the fisheries to go ahead, or farming produce to have a surplus, to provide means of communication and project public works. With railways into Kootenay, into the Nicola Valley, into Chilliwack, into the Okanagan Valley, into Cariboo and elsewhere, there is a certain prospect of these various districts attaining to a measure of their opportunities. In other words, the Government has not waited for the times to get good to move in these matters. They have, to drop into metaphor, greased the wheels of Fortune's car in order that she may arrive more speedily. When times do get good again, and as we have said the indications are of that being very soon in this Province, all the facilities for taking advantage of the improved condition of things will have been supplied and ready to hand, and the Province will be enabled to enter fully and without delay into an unexampled era of prosperity.

In saying what we have so far, it is not with the object of exalting the Government or any of its members into paragons of wisdom or greatness. We do not wish to exempt them from faults or condone their shortcomings on the one hand, or on the other hand to paint their virtues in hues so bright as to give color to their shadows. We believe them to be neither more nor less human than their fellows, and desire simply to credit them with having pursued a policy—defective it may have been in many minor points—which throughout has had a good, sound business basis, was on the whole well carried out, and is now being rewarded with a large measure of success.

A STATISTICAL COMPARISON:

A Comparison in Figures which Indicates the Progress of Seven Years,

And Shows the Province to be Healthy and Vigorous and Its Wealth Doubling Up.

No. 5.

Having reviewed the policy of the Government extending over a number of years, and carefully analyzed the conditions which have entered into and dictated that policy, let us now briefly and accurately present some of the results.

We propose to illustrate by a few figures of comparison the progress which the country has made since 1886, the period at which for convenience we have drawn the line between the old and new conditions inth is Province. In this we do not propose to point to the marvellous progress made in particular districts, such as West Kootenay, Okanagan and Westminster, or in the cities of the Coast, because that is within the personal knowledge of us all and self-evident, but consider the Province as a whole.

STATISTICS OF EXPANSION.

The aggregate of import and export trade of the Province in 1887 was $6,919,453 ; in 1892 it was $13,070,578.

The revenue of the Province in 1886 was $515,282 ; in 1893, $1,019,206.

The ordinary assets of the Province in 1886 were $789,829 ; in 1893, $1,492,734.

The aggregate assessment in the four cities of the Coast in 1886 was $10,750,000 ; in 1893, $46,750,000.

The population of 1881 was 49,459 ; in 1893 (census returns), 98,170.

The number of schools in 1886 was 92 ; in 1893, 166.

The number of teachers employed in 1886 was 116 ; in 1893, 242.

The number of pupils in attendance in 1886 was 5,345 ; in 1893, 11,496.

The average attendance in 1886 was 2,873 ; in 1893, 7,111.

The expenditure for education in 1886 was $88,521 ; in 1893, $190,558.

The value of our fisheries in 1886 was $1,974,887 ; in 1893, $4,250,000.

The revenue based on Provincial assessment in 1886 was $73,177 ; in 1893, $211,088.

The output of coal in 1887 was 413,360 tons ; in 1893, 978,294 tons.

HOW THE MONEY WAS SPENT.

Since the year 1886 there has been expended :

In hospitals and public institutions, $300,000; in education, $913,000; in roads, streets, bridges and wharves, $1,450,349; in works and buildings, $546,949; in surveys, $166,677.

Besides the cost of the administration of justice, civil government and all the rest of it, in forms of land subsidy or guarantee, assistance has been granted to the following roads that are either completed or under way: The Esquimalt & Nanaimo, Shuswap & Okanagan, Columbia & Kootenay, Nelson & Fort Sheppard, Nakusp & Slocan, Kaslo & Slocan and Victoria & Sidney Railways.

The other railways to which the Legislative Assembly has pledged assistance are the British Columbia Southern, the Chilliwack Railway, the Nicola Valley Railway, the Ashcroft & Cariboo Railway; and in this connection the assistance guaranteed to the bridge over the Fraser at Westminster is to be considered.

The assistance guaranteed to the promotion of the dyking and drainage in Westminster district is in line with the foregoing enterprises and not less important.

We quote here from the Budget Speech of the Hon. the Finance Minister:

"There have been built 110 school houtes at a cost of $174,441; 10 jails and lockups, $26,985; 12 court houses, $190,692; 595,000 acres of land surveyed, $83,424; 1,200 miles of road, 800 miles of trail, 600 bridges and 5,000 miles of roads and bridges kept in repair, at a cost of $1,531,683, making a total of $2,007,225, or a total expenditure on public works during this period of over $2,000,000. If we deduct from this $300,000 for repairs, we have still an expenditure of some $1,700,000 on public works, which are now represented by assets that are fully equal to the expenditure that has been made on them. We might value the 595,000 acres of land alone at least at one dollar per acre, and this is now open for settlement and is being plotted and mapped so that the immigrant may be thoroughly informed respecting it at the Land Office. But we have to add to these assets the public works that will result from the expenditure which has now to be voted, amounting to considerably over $400,000. This shows that the funds which we obtained from the loans referred to have been carefully expended in the manner which the country desired and which it expressed its own opinion of through the House at the time these loans were voted on for the purpose of public works."

A summary of the results may be placed in tabulated form as follows:

SUMMARY FOR SEVEN YEARS.

	Mainland.	*Island.*	*Total.*
Hospitals	$ 175,116	$ 123,989	$ 299,105
Education	496 719	416,143	912 862
R. S. B. & W.	992,941	457,408	1,450 349
Wrks. & Bldgs.	385,896	161 053	546,949
Surveys	98 930	67,747	166,677
Total	$2,149,602	$1,226 340	$3,375,942

NET PROVINCIAL DEBT.		REVENUE.	
1887	$ 449,836	1887	$ 541,517
1888	497,132	1888	608,678
1889	606,614	1889	706,780
1890	672,506	1890	835,463
1891	701,419	1891	959 248
1892	1,033 612	1892	1,020,002
1893	1,694,722	1893	1,012,257
		1894 (est)	1,058 691
		1895 (est)	1,178,149

A FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

	Gross debt.	*Total assets.*	*Interest.*
1887	$1,157,001	$ 707 165	$ 58,313
1888	1,780,125	1 282 993	89,878
1889	1,772 871	1,166 257	89,878
1890	1,797,820	1,125,314	89,878
1891	1,843,154	1,141,736	89,878
1892	2,876 036	1,842,424	118,978
1893	3,187,456	1,492,734	113,068

Value of public buildings is estimated at $1,150,000, of which sites cost in round numbers $100,000.

LEGISLATION MIRRORED.

High Educational Status of the Province—B. C's Municipal System.

Effective Administration of Justice—Sound Sanitary Measures—Mining Encouraged by Legislation.

No. 6.

The more material aspects of the Government of the Province have been dealt with in previous articles in which opposition criticism has been met in the spirit of argument and the statement of a long series of facts that cannot be gainsaid.

We now purpose to examine the character of the legislation as a whole, and its direct influence on the affairs and conditions of the Province.

OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM.

Education being of paramount importance in its moral and intellectual effects, our school system is worthy of first place. Even the most virulent opponents of the Government, excepting a few chronic splenetics, will not affirm that British Columbia has not taken a high educational status among the other Provinces. The training has been brought to a high standard, the character and attainment of teachers are exceptionally good, and a healthy moral tone pervades the whole system. Methods and legislation have progressed rapidly with material development and to-day are fully abreast of modern requirements. The transition from direct Governmental management to popular control has been speedy and almost complete. The history of our school system has been marked by its steady progress, uninterrupted and undisturbed by the sectarian and political issues that have marred the results observable elsewhere in the Dominion. In this respect our Province has been singularly blessed. From an educational point of view the people of British Columbia have every reason to be proud of their accomplishments.

THE CHARACTER OF GOVERNMENT.

Under our constitution there has been ample provision for the free development of municipal institutions, and while we have had the example and experience of other Provinces to guide us, we have been able to arrive at results equal, as compared with our requirements, to what has been achieved even in Ontario. As

population grows our municipal system, established on a broad and firm basis, will expand naturally and easily. There are few respects in which our municipal institutions are not equal to those of our most enlightened neighbors.

Our civil code contains the best features of modern jurisprudence, and its operations are as successful and as free from useless incumbrances as in any part of the Dominion. It has received the most careful attention of the Government and the Legislature and constant effort has been made to render it useful and workable.

It has been conceded on every hand that the administration of justice, so far as it has been in the power of the Government to make it effective, has been wholesome and vigorous. Our criminal code has been brought to a high state of perfection, and the law is administered with a firm hand in the prevention and punishment of crime. When we consider the extent of our sea coast, the physical character of the country, the mixture of populations and the contiguity of the American Republic, the success with which our law has been carried out is not only a matter for congratulation, but has earned for us the admiration of our neighbors.

CONSERVED MORALS AND HEALTH.

Apropos of these reflections, it may be stated, as something not capable of contradiction, that British Columbia is essentially a Province of law and order, and will compare favorably in this regard with any province in the Dominion or any country in the world. There is no country in which the rights of person and property are more sacred or better safeguarded, and if it were not for the offences imported into our criminal calendar by aliens and a few of our Indians our record would be unique. In a Western province, which to the Easterner carries with it a significance of what is best understood as the "wild and woolly," this is remarkable. As a people, British Columbians are sober, moral and law abiding, and in no degree, either politically or socially, turbulent.

If we accept this maxim as true, that the people are a reflection of the Government, or the Government a reflection of the people, there is little to condemn in the character of the administration into the history of which have been incorporated conditions such as we have described.

Scarcely less important in the light of the public weal, are sanitary considerations. As the direct result of dangers, then present and prospective, the Government placed on the statute book a Health Act, sound in principle, comprehensive in scope and drastic in application. In the face of an emergency, such as confronted the Province two years ago, the Government acted promptly and vigorously and stamped out the infection, and to-day machinery is provided whereby, without extraordinary means, any epidemic may be stayed and the general health conserved by the application of sound sanitary measures.

GOOD MINING LAWS.

A few years ago, when vein mining began to attract attention, the mining laws, which had had special reference to placer work, required careful revision, and at this task the Government set itself to work. In a new country, without experience in the requirements of quartz development, legislation must be to some extent experimental, and so it proved in this instance. Miners themselves, largely of the prospecting class, were very much divided in opinion as to what the law

should be, but although less than four years have elapsed since a mining commission was appointed to frame a code, and numerous alterations and re-alterations were found necessary since that time, the mining laws are now on a satisfactory basis and are meeting with approval everywhere. In this, as in other matters, the Government has shown every disposition to conserve the interests of so important an industry. Where mistakes were made, these were rectified as speedily as possible. A Government that is above reviewing its own actions and admitting its fallibility is not adapted for the government of a country where the "hea en-born" financiers and immaculate wise-acres in public policy are so conspicuously in the minority as in this Province.

LAND AND LABOR.

The Wholesome Influence of Legislation on these Important Interests.

How Agricultural Development is Affected—A Summary of Salient Points of Policy.

No. 7.

In former articles we have referred to the origin of the land system of British Columbia, concerning which so much has been said. It is scarcely necessary to refer to this again, except to say that other sources of revenue having arisen through the development of the country so that it was no longer necessary to depend upon the land sales, the Gouernment gradually modified its land system until it was reduced to pre-emption in small tracts for settlement only. In this there has been a recognition of and an adaptation to advanced methods of government in line with the general po icy as previously outlined. The Government has gone further and given practical effect to the principle of small holdings. This a matter requiring careful consideration, and the Premier has given public expression to his desire to give attention to some general scheme for the encouragement of small land holdings, whereby the accessible lands may be settled up. With the exception of New Zealand, this has not been attempted in any part of the world, but as the conditions are favorable for experiment in this Province, we may confidently look for practical legislation in this direction in the near future. The amendment to the Land Act of last session, and the recent laying off of five and ten acre tracts in the Riding of Richmond and the neighborhood of Victoria, and the announced intention of the Government to immediately offer these tracts to actual occupants for lease, with privilege of purchase, upon terms so favorable that any industrious man who acquires them may make himself a home, is a practical way of carrying out the Government's intentions on this subject.

THE LABOR QUESTION.

When we come to the question of labor, there are important issues to consider and several extremes to avoid. The labor organizations in this Province, as elsewhere, have been aggressive, but there is this important fact to keep in mind, that outside of the ever present Chinese question there are fewer problems to solve and fewer difficulties have been experienced in meeting the require-

ments of the labor interests than probably in any other part of Her Majesty's dominions.

So far as the Chinese are concerned, this is a matter with which constitutionally the Province can only exercise an indirect influence. True, a great many impracticable resolutions have been before the House, brought forward for political effect, but what the Government labored to achieve were practical results. The power of excluding or restricting Chinamen lies outside of the jurisdiction of any province of the Dominion, and resolutions manifestly aimed at doing what there was no hope of achieving, deterred rather than aided in bringing about desired results. In the matter of Chinese labor, a healthy moral and patriotic tone is better than any number of powerless resolutions or unconstitutional enactments. The patriotic citizen—the man true to his own community and to his own province—will patronize home industry and employ home labor to the farthest extent possible, and through the force of public opinion the employment of Chinese has been reduced to a very low limit, to menial occupations in which white labor does not care to compete, or those few instances where industry, owing to keen competition in prices, would not otherwise be carried on. There are very few persons who would not welcome the day when their presence was no longer necessary in any form. But without absolute exclusion, which is beyond Provincial or even Federal jurisdiction to enforce, there is no way of dealing with the Celestial population except by force of public opinion, and in this connection every citizen must bear his share of the responsibility. To a limited extent the employment of Chinese is now a grievance, but with the restrictions already in force and the state of public feeling, the evil has been reduced to a minimum. Statistics do not show that the Chinese population is proportionately on the increase. Rather the reverse. It is true that the Government has by resolution of the Legislature endeavored to increase the per capita tax to $100, and this would probably tend to still further diminish Chinese immigration, but so far these representations have not moved the Federal authorities, who undoubtedly view it in the wider light as affecting trade and international relationship. At all events, even in the minds of workingmen most affected, the everlasting "anti-Chinese" resolution of the word-of-mouth friends of labor has lost its political effect and its once captivating charm. The labor organizations and the labor element generally have opened their eyes to the fact that honeyed resolutions are not bread and that talk is the cheapest form of labor. They are recognizing the fact that the true friend of labor is the one who between election times, as well as immediately prior to them, supplies work, pays the highest wages going and makes the conditions of labor as favorable as possible. The Government, as a government, has carried out these practical principles, not only in conducting the business of the country, but in the influence which legislation has had upon the country. Employment found, which is, of course, a question of demand, there is no part of the world in which wages are so good, hours shorter and pay more secure. The poor man has every protection which the law can justly afford. Injustice, coercion or oppression is rare, and the opportunities under the law few. To arrive at just conclusions compare, for instance, the condition of our miners in Nanaimo and Wellington with those of Pennsylvania, or Great Britain.

THE LABOR BUREAU.

Having in view the labor problems affecting other countries and looking to the industrial development of which our resources give promise in mining, lumbering, manufacturing, and so on, the Government in the matter of adjusting amicably the relations of labor and capital in this Province took a long step in advance in establishing a Labor Bureau and Courts of Conciliation and Arbitration, and if the Government is to be blamed for anything particular in this measure, it was for stepping too far ahead of actual necessities. The introduction of this measure, which set an example for Ontario, was generally approved of by the labor element in this Province, and not a single voice was raised in the House in opposition, but no sooner was its machinery put in motion than the representatives of labor, for political purposes, set to work to frustrate its operations and with such success as to render it in its then form practically inoperative, notwithstanding that the principle of the law was everywhere a cardinal plank in the labor platform the world over. Without the cooperation of the very men for whose benefit it was created the bureau would be useless. The Government has, however, provided facilities for the settlement of labor disputes as they arise and has also instituted an inquiry into the conditions of labor as they exist in this Province, which will lead to some practical and definite results in the future.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.

Closely allied with industrial development is that of agriculture. The present administration has devoted much attention to the farming interests and succeeded not only in arousing a general interest in the subject, but aided materially in the protection and development of such interests. By the creation of a Bureau of Agricultural Information, it has added largely to the knowledge of our farming resources, and the annual report is eagerly sought for and is one of the most valuable of our official publications. Liberal assistance has been extended to the Fruit Growers' Association and to agricultural associations, and wise provision has been made for the prevention and destruction of pests. Horticulture and dairying have each had legislation specially adapted to their needs; and in every way possible the Department of Agriculture has done effective work. Assistance has been guaranteed towards the reclamation of overflowed low lands and towards railways for the general opening up of farming districts. As a consequence, the Province is entering upon an era of active agricultural development.

THE TRUE CRITERION.

In the foregoing articles we have briefly reviewed the policy of the Government of the last seven years, referred to its salient points and traced the principles underlying the whole course. It has been a policy of development worked out in the face of many difficulties, characterized, it is true, by some mistakes, but in the main crowned with success. Our administrators have not been brilliant orators or "heaven born" statesmen. They have been plain, practical business men, who have understood the wants of the country and adapted themselves to its varying conditions as time and circumstances would permit—the true criterion of successful government, by which they must now be judged.

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