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THE PACIFIC CANADIAN

Weekly News Digest and Journal of Observation and Comment.

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A STRAIGHT ISSUE

A very noticeable, significant, and altogether promising sign of the times, politically, in this Province, in the present crisis, is the widespread recognition of the fact that the people, whose rights have been so shamefully betrayed by a regime that has represented the exploiting interests as opposed to the people, must cease to play the game of "divide and conquer," set by the Government and its allies. That game has been worked to a standstill in Provincial elections during the decade and more, so that we have seen the anomaly of a Conservative-Socialist alliance actually keeping in power for a whole parliamentary term, and enabling it to buttress itself in power, an Administration whose principles and policies have been the very antipodes of Socialistic professions and glaringly opposed to popular rights and interests generally.

This is matter of history, and comparatively recent history, too, with which every student of Provincial political affairs is perfectly familiar, and it will not have been forgotten either how the leader of the Socialist party in British Columbia who consumated this "unholy alliance" profited by it fabulously, in collusion with the Government whom he served, and retired from public life a few years ago, repudiating and flouting the misguided party which he had used with an unscrupulous Administration as a step-ladder to his own aggrandisement.

We have been moved to recall this well-known episode in the political development of the Province by the perusal of an extract from a speech delivered in the recent Vancouver by-election campaign by that doughty and sincere champion of popular rights, Mr. Parker Williams, M.L.A., who for years was the staunch lieutenant in the Legislature of the Socialist leader who, as recalled above, used the party for his own sinister purposes and then cast it aside. Mr. Williams has seen through the Government game, and thus announced the new line which he proposes following in the future, in the course of a speech in support of Mr. Macdonald's candidacy in the late Vancouver by-election:

"While I have to step outside the Socialist party," said Mr. Williams. "I am not in any sense or form repudiating its theories. Its uncompromising attitude is, however, not satisfactory, and particularly so when that attitude has been such a weapon in the upbuilding of the Conservative party. It is not the Tory party that has smashed the Liberal party. It is the Socialist party that has done so. Mr. J. H. Hawthornthwaite practically set the pace and the rest of us followed. I am not trying to blame somebody else for our work. I am not saying that, for the time being, it did not seem the right thing to do. The position in which the Conservative party finds itself in this Province is a position more largely of the Socialist party's making than of the Conservative party."

Whether or not Mr. Williams is putting too large a share of responsibility upon the shoulders of the Socialist party for their mistaken course in the past in Provincial affairs may be a matter of opinion. Certain it is that, owing to the close balance of parties during the first parliamentary term of the McBride-Bowser regime, the three Socialists held the balance of power, and enabled the Government to so entrench itself, by the up-building and perfection of machine methods, that nothing but the political cataclysm that is now on, and the co-operation of all elements opposed to corrupt and machine government, could possibly dislodge it.

The necessity for such co-operation, as we have said, is being generally recognized, and with that recognition is an equally apparent determination to bring it about, another indication being the withdrawal, recently, of all the Labor candidates in Vancouver City. Taking the Province as a whole, there is an evident tendency to insure that the issue in the forthcoming general election shall, for all practical purposes, be a straight one between the Government, headed for the present by Mr. Bowser, call it what you will, and the Opposition, as constituted and organized by the Liberal party, under the leadership of Mr. Brewster. Even in cases such as the recent by-elections in Vancouver and Rossland, where third candidates were induced to come out to try and split the vote, the people have shown plainly that they have no intention of wasting time or votes over third candidates or side issues, or anything that would divert from the main and most momentous business of putting out of business a Government that by one means and another has been kept in power far too long, in the country's interests.

What is true of the Province as a whole, we make no doubt, will prove true also in our own immediate neighborhood—in the constituencies of New Westminster City and the Fraser Valley. The candidates, regularly chosen and approved at nominating conventions, have been in the field for months, and, in the case of the Liberal candidates, have shown their paces and justified their selection as standard bearers. While third candidates are talked of here and there—it is an open event and any one who puts up the entry money may run—the people, here as elsewhere, realise that they have too much at stake, in the necessity for overwhelmingly defeating the present Government to be turned aside for a moment into any by-path of personal or similar consideration that would divert them from the straight issue.

The Public Accounts for the year ending March 31, 1915, submitted to the Legislature this season, showed a deficit for that period of more than $4,000,000. The deficit for the year before that was $5,500,000 and for the year ending March 31, 1913, $3,200,000. Thus the deficits for the years 1912, 1913 and 1914 totalled $13,000,000. The Auditor General's report for the first nine months of the present year, that is, from April 1, 1915, to December 31, 1915, recently tabled, shows that the revenue in that period was $4,838,454 and the expenditure $6,900,125, a deficit of slightly more than $2,000,000. Thus, with the figures for the current year incomplete, the deficits since 1912 aggregate $15,000,000.

THE PASSING SHOW

It's "a rocky road to Dublin" Premier Bowser is travelling just now, trying to make his solid thirty-eight take the sharp curve with him on the Prohibition referendum tangent which the by-election knock-downs switched him on to with a jerk.

The usual docile member for Chilliwack, Mr. S. A. Cawley, while admitting that Prohibition would suit his constituents, and that the referendum was the thing, flew the track on the question of "compensation," which he declared must be considered. And there were others.

Another of the solid and subservient, on matters of general policy, W. T. MacLean, member for Nelson, scandalized the House, on Thursday of last week, and incidentally furnished an object lesson, it is said, of the necessity of Prohibition, by breaking out in a coarse and near blasphemous tirade against the prohibitionists and all their works. A demand is being made by some that the Legislature, out of respect to itself, ought to insist on MacLean's resignation or expulsion. But that would mean another by-election! Heaven forbid, quoth Bowser.

They have a so-called "independent" in the House, Mr. Harold Forster, representing Columbia, one of the Interior constituencies, and he took advantage of the debate on the address, one day last week, to display, in word at least, more outspoken independence than usual. Recent unmistakable evidences of the crumbling and imminent disintegration of the Government machine may have had something to do with this. Be that as it may, he gave the Administration a fearful roasting on its record and policy all along the line, and then tried to preserve his "independence" by throwing some back-handed bouquets at the Opposition. The division on the amendment to the address in reply will test the sincerity of the hon. gentleman's words. He can't very well sit on the fence there and throw brickbats and bouquets indiscriminately.

F. J. MacKenzie, the member for Delta, who is conspicuous in khaki on the floor of the House, seems, according to the reports, to have exploited his uniform in his contribution to the debate on the address, the other day, and to have displayed the exceedingly bad taste of making the unfounded and impertinent charge that Conservatives were more patriotic than Liberals in the matter of enlisting, and that even he himself was a bright and shining contrast in patriotic devotion to his opponent in Delta riding, Mr. Paterson. If you said those things, F. J., you hadn't ought to. It is too bad that any one should draw ridicule upon the high profession of arms at this time, and detract from the prima facie credit accruing to himself from joining the colors by so palpably suggesting a political motive for the act—which no one else would have been so unkind as to insinuate, notwithstanding that Lt. MacKenzie, M L.A., is a candidate for re-election in Delta and that the elections will be over long before he will have a chance to "flesh his maiden sword" in Flanders or anywhere else at the front.

The use which the Bowser Government is making of its recent lightning-change, by-election conversion to a prohibition referendum (long ago promised by the Liberal party) is well hit off pictorially by a cartoon in Monday morning's Vancouver Sun, entitled "A Brilliant Idea." Stage Manager and Impressario Bowser is shown standing before a large white screen bearing the inscription "Prohibition," and saying in an aside around the corner to a lot of burly beneficiaries of the Government's land and railway policies, with their loot, crouched behind the friendly shelter of the screen: "Now that I have a nice clean screen up, all you fellows have to do is to keep behind it."

Native modesty forbids us reproducing the kind and flattering send-off which our esteemed local contemporary The Columbian, in its issue of the 16th inst., magnanimously gave The Pacific Canadian. We can only retaliate by insinuating that the editor of our e. l. c. is a scholar, a gentleman, and a jolly good fellow, which nobody can deny, and that the chief protagonist of the same is all that and a soldier, bang-up officer, and near Senator to boot. And now that we have shaken hands and embraced in the centre of the ring, go to it, McDuff, and hanged be he who first cries, "Hold, enough!" Truth to tell, we should hate, for old association's sake, to lambaste The Columbian, and it's a safe bet that there'll be no hitting below the belt on either side.

The phrase, "Sins of omission and Commission," has gained a new and double meaning from the record of the "business Government," the present remnant of which is represented by Premier Bowser. If you spell "Commission" with a big "C," it means Royal Commission to provide friends and supporters of the Government in and out of the House with fat pickings at the people's expense. Up to March 31st last, these Commissions—Labor, Agricultural, and Indian Lands—have cost the Provincial treasury, it has been computed, nearly a quarter of a million dollars in the last few years, without counting the cost of the Indian Lands Commission (still going strong) for the year ending with this month, which will be, at the ruling rate, about $50,000 more. A sample of these fat pickings (of the people's pockets) is the $30.00 a day for 365 days (Sundays included) comprising the financial year 1914-15, paid to J. P. Shaw, member of the Legislature from Kamloops and Government supporter, of course, in violation of the Independence of Parliament Act, but which has been made all right by one of Mr. Bowser's convenient "enabling acts." The ordinary every-day "sins of omission and commission" (spelled with a small "c") of the "business Government" has cost the country since 1911 the disappearance of an eight million surplus, the piling up of an eighteen million shortage instead, with annual deficits reaching as high as four millions, and other things, cash, collateral, and guarantees, on the wrong side of the account, too numerous to mention.

HERE AND THERE.

The hearty good wishes of Canadians will go with the American punitive expedition into Mexico after the scalps of Villa and his band of cutthroats. The chances and hazards of the enterprise are by no means light, judged by previous experiences with guerilla fighters on their own ground. If, as suggested, that other bandit chieftain, Zapata, rebel leader in the south, is ready to join Villa, with 40,000 men, a protracted struggle of unknown magnitude is on the boards.

What's in a name? The Imperial Conservative Association executive, of Victoria—a new designation, apparently, for the anti-Bowser Conservatives—has invited Sir Charles Hibert Tupper to address them at the capital, in the near future. Mr. Blakemore, editor of the Victoria Week, is the "chief push," it seems, in this laudable effort to reorganize the Conservative party, in pursuance of which he has sent letters to all Conservative associations in British Columbia, asking for expressions of opinion as to the advisability of holding a Conservative convention before the general election.

The definite failure by the Germans, after repeated and most strenuous and costly attempts, extending over a month past, to break through the French defences at Verdun, has brought the war to the verge at least of a new phase, when Germany, with the backbone of her offensive broken, will be compelled to fall back on the defensive role, with serious results to her prestige at home and among the Balkan neutrals still on the fence. Hopes of a speedy collapse and an early end of the war are thus being voiced, but the world will be prepared for considerable delay yet in the realizatio nof this consummation devoutly to be wished. In the meantime, the allied forces at Salonica are reported to have begun an advance and to have eliminated the neutral zone between their own and the enemy lines.

The brilliant idea has dawned upon Premier Bowser, as a sort of second thought, that the people of British Columbia have said in the by-elections that they don't want the policy which he particularly featured in the by-election campaigns; therefore, he is released by their verdict from carrying out his policy and proposes to bring down just what it suits him to and withhold what suits him. This is a right about face from his declaration immediately after the elections, echoed by all the organs, that the adverse verdict of the electors would make no difference—the Government's policy would be carried out just the same. Premier Bowser has another guess coming. If he will think hard enough, it may occur to him, as another afterthought, that the people object to him and his Government even more than they do to his policy, and that the obvious thing for him to have done at once was to resign. The idea that the people don't want his policy, but want the Premier and the Government behind the policy, could only have occurred to a mind obsessed by the passion for power. What would become of the very essence of responsible government, if that perverted notion obtained?

By the way, what becomes of the Victoria Colonist's famous pledge, with which it electrified the electorate on the eve of the by-election, in a last desperate hope to save the Government from defeat. This unique journalistic pledge was in terms following: "We hereby give notice that, if Mr. Bowser and his colleagues do not give evidence of a determination to fulfil the promises referred to, and specifically if they do not introduce into the House legislation to give effect to their shipbuilding policy and make every effort in their power to secure its passage, and if they do not give unmistakable evidence by appropriations or otherwise of their determination to carry out their promises in respect to the Agricultural Credits Act, the Colonist will withdraw its support from Mr. Bowser and his colleagues at the next general election. In making this statement we do not suppose for one moment that we shall be called upon to carry it into effect, for we are absolutely confident of the good faith of the Government and of its determination to leave no effort untried to carry out the pledges it has made or of its ability to do so." The Colonist added that its pledge would hold even if the Government candidate should be defeated.

Since the war, there have been some remarkable changes, upheavals, and retirements, both in the personnel of the cabinets and among the "higher-ups" having directly to do with the administration of naval and military matters, in practically all the belligerent nations, including our own, but one of the most remarkable and imperfectly understood on the outside is the recently announced retirement, by resignation as it is euphemistically termed, of the great Admiral Von Tirpitz, autocratic head, under the Kaiser, of the German navy, and associated unforgettably in the public mind with the submarine campaign of frightfulness exemplified in the Lusitania and similar crimes against humanity on the high seas. With the exception of one or two sporadic instances, the German navy, which is still as a whole bottled up in the Kiel Canal, has not done anything to be proud of, but Von Tirpitz is hardly blamed for that, for there is no indication of any intention by Germany to reform in the item of submarine outrages, but rather to the contrary. Internal political considerations and exigencies—perhaps a growing conviction that the navy ought to have been able to do something to relieve the ever increasing economic strangulation of Germany—are possible causes of this somewhat sensational development.

While, personally speaking, no one would begrudge the genial Sir Richard McBride ample emoluments to maintain fitting state in the Agent-General's office in London, to which he has retired, still, when the people, who generously kept Sir Richard in the position of Premier for twelve years, have to pay the bills, the so-called "non-contentious" proposal to increase the Agent-General's salary from $10,000 to $15,000 a year and pay a gratuity of $5,000 to Mr. Turner, besides an annual pension of $6,000 to him and $3,000 to his wife on his

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MR. MACDONALD'S SPEECH

The speech in the debate on the address of the senior member for Vancouver, unavoidably postponed by the sudden death of the Legislature on the 14th inst., was resumed in the artificially resuscitated body, next day. Passing over Mr. Macdonald's preliminary conventional remarks, he scored a neat one on the Minister of Mines, Hon. Mr. Ross, whose new found enthusiasm over the Prohibition referendum, he said, made him almost fall over the penitent bench railing. In answer to that zealous convert's insistent demand as to when the Liberal party was going to submit the prohibition referendum, Mr. Macdonald replied: "I might say in reply to that, that, strong as our position may be at the present time, I am not aware that, acting upon our own initiative, we have power to introduce such legislation. That remains with the Government, but, if a measure is introduced satisfactory to those agitating for it, we will give it active and energetic support so that, in accordance with the Liberal principle that majorities have the right to decide, the matter may be submitted to the people for endorsation or otherwise."

Coming to financial matters, Mr. Macdonald said there had been a monotonous refrain by Government speakers in the debate that Liberal campaigners during the by-elections had slandered the Government into defeat. With the consent of Mr. Speaker, therefore, he proposed to come to particulars in substantiation of what were alleged to have been general charges made during the by-elections. "We pointed out, for example, on the hustings," continued Mr. Macdonald, that five years ago the Government had a cash surplus of eight million dollars. We traced the operations since and found that not only had the surplus disappeared but that there had been an expenditure over revenue of eighteen million dollars. For the ordinary expenditure of the province the Government found it necessary to borrow $1,500,000 on treasury notes and then had to take authority to borrow ten million dollars more. That was a startling change in five short years. Where did the money go? Has there been such an increase in the population since 1911 or such an opening up of new territory of the province as would account for this? We quoted instance after instance of indefensible payments—such as that of a salary of $15,000 a year to an American engineer to lay out a pleasure ground in Strathcona Park, not to mention the fact that in two years about a quarter of a million dollars were spent on the construction of roads and trails now being overgrown with verdure. There is an expenditure that my hon. friends can justify to the country if they choose to. We pointed out that $150,000 had been spent on commissions of one kind and another, and that large commissions had been paid in such a matter as the purchase of the Kitsilano Reserve in the City of Vancouver."

Speaker Calls a Halt.

The Speaker refused to allow the hon. gentleman to go further on that line, as there were questions on the paper in regard to that.

Mr. Macdonald—"We are challenged in the House to make good these charges we made outside, and I am simply directing attention to some specific illustrations."

Mr. Speaker—"That will come before the Public Accounts Committee."

Mr. Macdonald—"It is equally true that many other matters and much legislation is referred in advance to committees of the House, and if we are to be precluded from discussion of this matter it precludes us, it seems to me, from discussion of all other matters. I would like to point out in a general way that I would and could offer instances of indefensible expenditure in that short period, enumerating them one after the other until they would mount into the millions, so that hon. gentlemen who follow might say, if they could, where the statements made on the hustings were not correct."

The Speaker said these matters would all come before the Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. Macdonald—"I might say further that we hold this Government, strange to say, strictly responsible for its actions in this regard, and we are told that statements of this kind made on the hustings amount to abuse and vilification. It seems to me—of course, it is a truism—that the people who contribute the money have a right to know how it is expended, and it further seems to me that I would be in order in discussing these matters on the floor of the House. I have said that I can give instances of indefensible expenditures. I was going to say we gave time for an explanation to my hon. friend the member for Kamloops (Mr. Shaw), who apparently in connection with the Indian commission labored 365 days in the year, Sundays and Mondays, drawing from the public exchequer $30 per day, and I suppose we might thank heaven at the same time that the reformers of our calendar had not yet made the year longer."

The Speaker objected that this also was on the order paper.

Mr. Macdonald—"There were other matters referred to on the hustings which I do not refer to now, Mr. Speaker, in view of your ruling. I would say generally that we challenge hon. gentlemen opposite to point to any particular and definite statement made that was not borne out by the records."

Worthless Government Figures.

Referring to statistics put forward by the Government to show a theoretical prosperity that did not exist, Mr. Macdonald said:

"I would call attention to some figures quoted in the report of the Agricultural Commission to show that production has increased in order that the House may know whether it can rely on the figures quoted. The Minister of Lands quoted figures as to production in recent years. I do not know where they were ascertained, but I remember the member for Newcastle saying that he was never asked to make any returns, and I know other cases where the same is true. The figures must be obtained in some surreptitious way, and not from the producers themselves.

"At page 360 of the report of the Royal Committee on Agriculture, it is stated that the imports of agricultural products in 1913 from outside Canada were $7,133,177 and from other provinces $12,936,980, or a total of $20,070,157. But if you examine the table you will find there is no mention of wheat, flour, bran, shorts, oats, rolled oats, or any kind of grain. Let me refer you to another matter to show you how reliable these figures are. At page 359 the value of agricultural products is given for 1913 at $38,124,819. In that total which purports to give agricultural production for that year you will find one item of $19,990,860 for live stock. If you turn to page 354 you will find what purports to be a statement of livestock in the province at that time and the total is precisely the same as that given at page 359. Analysis shows this to be livestock of various ages, and even seventeen million dollars' worth could not be the product of that year. I do not think it would be possible to give a more striking illustration of the utter worthlessness of statistics of this sort.

The Land Situation.

"There has been a great deal said about the land situation," continued Mr. Macdonald, "and the Minister claims that the criticism directed against his department is not justified. I claim that the administration of the Crown lands has been so admittedly bad that it should scarcely be necessary to offer an argument to prove it. He says as a matter of fact that only two million acres have been alienated although the records show five million acres alienated. It has passed from the control of the crown and, if the payments are not made, there will be a reversion to the crown, but on a question from the leader of the Opposition as to when reversion would take place it was plain that there is no intention to lift that blanket which is retarding settlement. Along the C. N. Pacific line we have a situation where the available land for settlement is withdrawn. The Minister says they have 2,300,000 acres surveyed for settlement, but whether it is accessible or not we are not told. Of what value is it to say we have this land, when it is a fact that it has not railway or any other facilities to provide the settlers with ingress and egress. The situation is such that settlers going on that land could not do more than sustain life, and perhaps not even that.

"It is imperatively necessary that settlers should be introduced, but the Minister wishes to defer the time when the land will be reclaimed for the people. It is the duty of the Government at once, on fair terms, to reclaim this area along the railway lines. But there is no prospect of amelioration of conditions as long as this Government remains in power. I think the electorate will see at the first chance that a new Government pledged to reclaim this land will be placed in power to carry out a land policy that will meet with the approval of the people."

After dealing further with the land question, including the alienation of coal and timber lands, and charging the Government with heavy responsibility for over-capitalization of companies and the flotation of concerns which had greatly damaged the credit and good name of the Province, Mr. Macdonald closed with an expression of confidence that as a result of the next appeal to the people, "we will have conditions under which it will not be necessary to quote figures and statistics to show that the industries of British Columbia are prosperous but this will be found in the increased prosperity and earnings of the people throughout the Province."

Batch of Government Speakers.

As Government speakers in the Legislative debates are well taken care of in the Government press, The Pacific Canadian, in view of the exigencies of space at present, does not deem it necessary to review these utterances at length.

H. H. Watson (Vancouver) followed Mr. Macdonald, and, among other things, speaking of the by-elections, expressed the opinion that an Opposition was a good thing; the Government's railway policy, he thought had been justified at every step; and woman suffrage and prohibition he believed to be inevitable, but he never saw a politician do anything unless he expected to get something in return for it (evidently thinking in this connection of Premier Bowser's sudden flop on the latter question).

Alex. Lucas (Yale), in the course of a lengthy contribution to the debate, submitted a lot of the usual Government "prosperity statistics," which he admitted, on cross-examination by Mr. Brewster, were for the census period ending April, 1911!

H. E. Forster (Columbia), independent Conservative, took up the tale in the sitting of the 16th inst., indulging himself in a severe criticism of the Government, and some balancing flings at the Opposition.

Dr. G. A. McGuire (Vancouver) followed and featured the desperate and rather amusing Government tactics (since the by-elections) of trying to make out the Bowser Government to be the devoted championed of prohibition, and the Liberal party, which last September declared for the referendum, to be its opponents! Mr. Brewster and Mr. Macdonald "called" some of the reckless misstatements of the worthy doctor, to his evident confusion.

The debate was resumed on Friday, the 17th inst., by Lieut. F. J. MacKenzie (Delta), who appears in uniform, and naturally featured military matters and is reported, incidentally, to have magnified the patriotism of himself and of Conservatives generally as compared with his opponent in Delta and the Liberal young men of the riding.

Hon. Wm. Manson (Skeena), President of the Council, acknowledged the compliment paid his riding in calling him to the Bowser cabinet, and quoted some of the Government stock of reassuring statistics to convince people that they must be prosperous.

Wm. Hunter (Slocan) made a "back to the land" plea and gave the House some idea of the progress of the mining industry in the Slocan.

The adjournment of the debate was moved by Premier Bowser, who resumed on Monday, 20th inst., in a fighting speech, of which the following was given by the Province's Victoria correspondent as the "substance": "Opposition followers have been shedding crocodile tears over me. They have been saying that I am in a dying condition. But I am neither dying physically nor politically." Mr. Bowser certainly showed in his speech that, if he must die politically, he is going to die awfully hard, for he hung on like grim death to his prohibition referendum life-preserver, which he inflated from time to time with the palpable and now stale falsehood that the Liberal party was in collusion with the liquor interests to defeat prohibition!

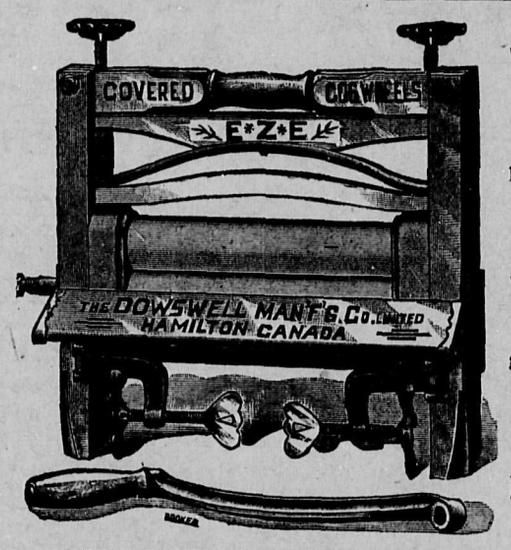
HERE AND THERE.

[Continued from Page One]

demise, takes the proportions of just a little too large a dose to be swallowed at a gulp, as Mr. Bowser insisted on forcing the Opposition to do. The dose does not become any more palatable when comparisons are instituted, either. "It is higher," (that is the salary alone) remarks the Times, which has been looking up the figures, "than the remuneration paid to Sir George Perley, the Canadian High Commissioner, who receives $10,000 a year; higher than the salary of the Prime Minister of Canada, who receives $12,000; the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, or any other public officer in the Dominion. Ontario, with a population of nearly three million people, to our 400,000, pays its Agent-General $3,600 a year; the Agent-General for South Australia receives $6,000; the Agent-General for New South Wales, which has a population of 1,646,734, receives $9,250, which is a little less than Mr. Turner receives now; the Agent-General for Queensland, population 605,813, receives a salary of $6,250, while West Australia's representative is paid $7,500."

Will Mr. Bowser, asks the Victoria Times, permit Mr. Macdonald to find out how it was that Alvo von Alvensleben, the Kaiser's friend, was able to loot the Dominion Trust of a million dollars, notwithstanding the Trust Company inspection regulations of which Mr. Bowser was so proud and the fact that the vigilant firm of Bowser, Reid & Walbridge were solicitors to the defunct company and occupied offices in the company's building?

In spite of Government professions of welcoming an Opposition in the House, the real Government sentiment is doubtless best expressed by the notice of motion given last week by Mr. Pooley, a zealous Government supporter, for the appointment of a committee to look into certain alleged irregularities by the Government's returning officers in the conduct of the recent Vancouver and Victoria by-elections, with a view to the unseating of Messrs. Brewster and Macdonald. Just fancy unseating Liberals elected by overwhelming majorities on account of (if true) irregularities by the Government's paid officials! Even Mr. Bowser, in one of his brilliant second thoughts, is afraid to try it on; for he has given it out through the Government press that: "Likely enough the Government does not propose to take any drastic action against Messrs. Macdonald and Brewster." How kind!



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A school for non-com. officers has been opened at the headquarters of the 131st, in charge of Sergt. Ennson. There are fifty-two candidates.

Your friends can buy any thing you can give them—except your photograph. Hurndall does fine work at 624 Columbia St. Phone 125R. *

Women will vote at the next Provincial elections, if the bill introduced in the Legislature by John H. Place, Socialist member for Nanaimo, becomes law, June 1st being date to take effect.

Hon. C. J. Doherty, Minister of Justice, introduced a bill in the Dominion Parliament to prohibit the importation of intoxicating liquors into any province that has enacted prohibition.

The debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne was concluded Wednesday afternoon, after continuing three weeks, and the Liberal amendment defeated and the address adopted by a party division.

We are still doing business at the old stand. If there is anything we can do for you in the plumbing, heating or sheet metal line, 'phone 586. Mannering & MacKenzie will give your needs their immediate attention. *

Lieut. L. S. McGill, of the B. C. Bantams' recruiting office, Vancouver, was in town some days ago looking for recruits for the short men's battalion. A considerable number of small men in the 121st at Queen's Park are reported to be seeking transfers to the bantams' battalion.

Among those who will contribute to the programme at the cabaret performance in the Hotel Russell, this evening, for the benefit of the 121st Battalion fund, will be Mrs. J. H. Diamond, Miss Nora McGillivray, Vancouver; Lieut. Cullan, of the 121st Battalion, and Pte. Alderdyce, of the 72nd Battalion.

The directors of the Y.W.C.A. wish to thank the citizens who responded generously to the recent appeal for funds to carry on the public department of this worthy work. They will be glad to receive further subscriptions (which may be sent to Mrs. C. E. Osborne, secretary, care of Y.W.C.A. building, city) to make up the required sum of $4)0.

Capt. and Mrs. Robert Fenton, Tenth street, this city, celebrated their silver wedding Friday evening last. Some forty friends and relatives were present, and a very enjoyable social time was held. A pleasing feature of the evening was the presentation of a handsome silver tea service to the host and hostess, who have been residents of the Royal City for more than a quarter of a century.

The principal business at the meeting of the Liberal Association held in the Anniedale school, on the 15th inst., was the election of officers as follows: President, W. D. Frost; vice-president, L. Moore; secretary-treasurer, G. H. Wales; executive committee, L. Williams, A. Ross and K. Beaton. The association intends holding a smoking concert at Tynehead, further particulars of which will appear shortly.

Mr. D. Whiteside, in an address to the Young Liberal Association, Wednesday evening, elucidated upon the practical objects of Liberal policies, Provincial and Federal, in illustration of Liberal aims and ideals. Among other things, he emphasized the importance of the formation of a naval reserve to be composed of white fishermen, British subjects, to whom the fishing licences should be issued, to the exclusion of Asiatics.

The Linemen's Strike.

The latest development in the strike of the eight linemen in the City Electric Light Department is the report of City Electrician Digby that he had filled all the vacant places with experienced men. On the strikers' part, it is announced, they have applied to the Minister of Labor, Ottawa, for arbitration with the city, under the Conciliation Act. The city, however, takes the view that such action should have been taken, if at all, before striking, and not after.

As to the origin of the trouble, in pursuance of a general cut in municipal expenditures, the Council reduced the linemen's wages from $4.35 to $4.10 per day. The men claim 20c per day additional, to equalize certain extra privileges accorded B. C. E. R. and Western Canada Power Co. employees. The Council's position is that this is a new demand by city linemen, which would practically neutralize the cut, and that, in any event, the city maintained its $4.35 rate for six months after the Electric Railway and Power Companies had cut to $4.10, with privileges. The foregoing, as far as space will permit, comprises the bones of the contention.

Are You a Registered Voter?

Are you on the Provincial Voters' list? If you are not sure, ring up Phone No. 12 [Liberal Club rooms] or call at rooms, Clarkson st., Westminster Trust building.

Being on the Municipal Voters' list and paying taxes does not entitle you to go on the Provincial Voters' list. You are required to sign an application. Attend to this at once, and, if not on, register now, as Monday, April 3rd, is the last day, if you wish to have a vote at the next election.

Valuator Money to Loan Farms for Sale
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Dewdney Liberal Convention.

The Dewdney District Liberal Association held its annual convention in Port Coquitlam Agricultural Hall, on Saturday last, Mr. A. Thompson, Mission, in the chair, which was afterwards taken by Reeve L. E. Marmont, Coquitlam, the newly elected president. Fifty-three delegates were in attendance, representing the associations of Ports Coquitlam, Moody, Hammond and Haney, Mission, Ioco, Millardville, Burquitlam, Deroche and Nicomen Island. The other officers, elected by acclamation, are: Hon. president, Sir Wilfrid Laurier; hon. vice-presidents, H. C. Brewster, M. P. P., Lieut. D. Martyn; vice-president, Maxwell Smith; secretary, C. H. Croke, Mission; executive committee, the presidents and secretaries of the local associations ex officio.

Spallumcheen District Notes.

Mr. W. H. Keary, Mayor of this city for many years and Exhibition Commissioner during a most flourishing period in the history of the Royal Agricultural and Industrial Society, of this city and district, is now a resident of Armstrong and Reeve of the District Municipality of Spallumcheen, which, from the following interesting news notes contributed by Mr. Keary, is evidently a fine producing section of the Province:

The prospects in this district, says Mr. Keary, from an agricultural standpoint, for 1916, were never better. We may experience some difficulty in harvesting, owing to the scarcity of labor, which is caused to a great extent by the number of men who have gone to the front. This city and district contributed two machine guns and a considerable amount to the Patriotic Fund, as well as to the Red Cross Society.

We shipped by C. P. R. from this agency, for the year 1915, in the neighborhood of twelve hundred cars of merchandise — potatoes, onions, carrots, cabbage, beets, turnips. celery, wheat, oats, hay, alfalfa, lumber, etc.

They have almost perfect exhibition grounds, here, with up-to-date stabling for cattle, horses, sheep, and swine, and expect to hold, the last days of September, the best and largest exhibition of agricultural and horticultural products ever shown in this valley.

City Market.

In spite of weather conditions not the most favorable, to-day's market was the best for weeks. There was a good supply of poultry, which all sold out at quoted prices. Pork was in brisk demand, exceeding the supply, and went up a cent a pound and in one or two cases a shade more. Beef sold readily at same prices as last week. The price for veal A No. 1 carcasses stiffened slightly, with supply not equal to demand. Eggs (which went up a few cents) and butter were in usual large supply and sold at quoted prices.

POULTRY.

Hens	19c to 22c
Springs	20c to 23c
Poultry, dressed, young	24c to 25c
Poultry, dressed, hens	22c to 24c
Ducks, live weight	25c to 27c
Poultry, live weight lb	21c to 22c
Geese, each	$1.50 to $2

VEGETABLES.

Potatoes, per ton	$16 to $20
Potatoes, per sack	90c to $1
Onions, per sack	$1.50
Carrots, per sack	75c
Turnips, per sack	75c
Cabbage, per lb	3½c
Beets, per sack	75c
Parsnips, per sack	75c

FRUIT.

Apples, per box	$1 to $1.25

EGGS AND BUTTER.

Eggs, retail	30c
Eggs, wholesale	24c to 25c
Butter, dairy, retail	37½c to 40c

WHOLESALE MEAT

Beef, carcass	10½c to 11½c
Beef, hindquarters	13c
Beef, forequarters	11c
Pork, per lb	12c to 14c
Pork, heavy, per lb	8c to 11c
Veal, No. 1, per lb.	14c to 16c
Veal, No. 2, per lb	12c to 13c
Live pigs, young	$3 to $4.50

TRAVELLERS' DIRECTORY.

For the busy business man and the travelling public, the following concise summary of the railway time tables, giving times of departure, etc., of passenger trains or trams from this city, will be convenient for reference:

B. C. ELECTRIC RAILWAY.

Westminster Branch (Central Park Line)—For Vancouver: 5.00 and 5.40 a.m., daily except Sunday; 6.00 a.m., daily; 6.20, 6.40 and 6.50 a.m., daily except Sunday; 7.00 a.m., daily, and every twenty minutes until 11.20 p.m. Last car, daily, 12.00 midnight.

Fraser Valley Branch—For Chilliwack and way points: 7.20 a.m., daily except Friday (for Jardine only); 6.20 a.m., Friday only, for Mt. Lehman; 9.20 a.m., daily, for Chilliwack; 1.40 and 5.05 p.m., daily, for Chilliwack.

Lulu Island Branch—For Vancouver and Steveston: 7.00 a.m., daily except Sunday; 9.00 and 11.00 a.m., and 1.00, 3.00 and 5.00 p.m., daily; 6.00 p.m., daily except Sunday; 7.00, 9.00 and 11.00 p.m., daily; 12.30 midnight, daily.

Burnaby Lake Branch—For Vancouver: 5.30 and 6.30 a.m., daily except Sunday; 7.30 a.m., daily; 8.30 a.m., daily except Sunday; 9.30 and 11.30 a.m., daily; 12.30 p.m., Saturday only; 1.30 and 3.30 p.m., daily; 4.30 p.m., daily except Sunday; 5.30 p.m., daily; 6.00 p.m., Sunday only; 6.30 p.m., daily except Sunday; 8.30 and 10.30 p.m., daily.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

Departure—6.40, for Mission and Seattle; 8.50, for Toronto, and Arrow Lake via Revelstoke; 18.15, for Agassiz; 20.05, for Montreal, and Okanagan via Sicamous.

Arrival—7.45, from Port Moody and Coquitlam; 10.15, from Montreal, Okanagan, and Agassiz Local; 19.15, from Port Moody and Coquitlam; 21.20, from Toronto and other Eastern points.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY.

North Bound (arrival)—6.44 a.m., 2.40 and 9.34 p.m.

South Bound (departure)—1.10 and 10.35 a.m. and 4.35 p.m.

From Port Guichon and Sumas, 10.45 a.m.

For Port Guichon and Sumas, 2.45 p.m.

"CHELSEA"
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Smoky City Laundry Flakes, per pkg.....10c
Smoky City Cleaner, for cleaning wall paper, calsomine, etc., per tin.....25c
Powdered Bon Ami, per tin.....15c
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Let us supply your fish for Lent.
Smoked Salmon, per lb...15c
Smoked Halibut, per lb...15c
Salt Cod, 2 lb. blocks, each..30 and 35c
Salt Cod [boneless strips] per lb 20c
Kippers, 3 lbs. for.....25c
Finnan Haddie, per lb.....20c
CHEESE
McLaren's Cream, each...10c 35c, 65c
McLaren's Pimento, each..10c
Roquefort, Edam, Cream Brick. etc.
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LOCAL LEGISLATURE.

Some More Awkward Questions for Ministers--Life of Legislature Arbitrarily Prolonged.

The review of the proceedings of the Provincial Legislature in last week's issue of this paper was principally occupied with the important deliverance by Mr. H. C. Brewster, Liberal leader, on the 9 th. inst. in the debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne, and the amendment which he moved to that address.

Note was also taken of several series of very embarrassing questions of public importance, for the ministers to answer, of which notice has been given by different opposition members. These exasperating inquiries by an inquisitive opposition regarding shady and dubious government transactions are piling up every day and when the debate on the address is concluded, ministers from the Premier down, will have to do a dance on the grid iron for the public information and edification.

A number of additional posers have been put on the order paper since our last, of which we have space only for a summary, as follows:

Further Awkward Queries.

Mr. Brewster will move for an order of the House for a copy of the petition forwarded by John Oliver to His Honor the Lieutenant Governor asking for an inquiry into land frauds, which will give an opportunity to discuss this matter. He will ask the Minister of Lands for a statement of the amount of money received by the province on account of royalty on pulp timber manufactured in the Province during the years 1910 to 1914 inclusive, and of the quantity of saw logs and shingle bolts cut on provincial crown lands and exported from the province during the years 1912 to 1915 inclusive.

Mr. Williams has a supplemtary question respecting the "company" town of Anyox, which is owned and controlled by the Granby Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company. Its estimated population is about 3,000 but the site of the town is assessed at only $7.50 per acre. The adjoining townsite of McKinnon, owned by other people, on which there are about 12 persons residing, is assessed at $450 an acre. Mr. Williams wants to know why this is thus.

Mr. Macdonald will cross-question the Government, to the extent of at least thirteen (they can't get away from that ill omened number) separate posers, on the guaranteed bond issue of $10,000,000 for Canadian Northern Pacific terminals. He even wants to know in what bank or banks was the proceeds of these bonds deposited; what amount was realized by sale or hypothecation; what amounts expended, with particulars of such expenditures; and what amount or amounts have been diverted to any-purpose other than those connected with terminals.

When the Government gets through this grilling at the hands of Mr. Macdonald as to its doings with its C. N. R. protege, the Premier or one of his Ministers will be put in the box again, by Mr. Brewster, to answer no less than nineteen brain twisters with regard to the same railway company's performances, or lack of performance, on Vancouver Island, touching what is known as the Alberni branch of the C. N. R. Mr. Brewster wants to know everything there is to be known about this much neglected and long overdue piece of work, among other things: Is it a fact that only approximately 55 per cent. of the work has been done and approximately 83 per cent. of the moneys guaranteed have been released to the ratlway company?

Contradicting the Facts!

In the session of Friday afternoon, 10th inst., Hon. W. R. Ross, Minister of Lands, made an effort to answer the unanswerable arraignment of the Government by Mr. C. H. Brewster. In the classical language of the News-Advertiser, Mr. Ross "contradicted all the facts" brought forward by the Liberal leader. He added some new figures to the already long and contradictory series of statistical estimates of the land taken up in one way or another. He quibbled on the word "alienated," and refused to consider as alienated any land except what had been paid for and crown granted. In the matter of the vast area of coal lands under lease or license he ignored the point that the leader of the Opposition has always stated that these are leased with the option of purchase. He asserted positively that the Lands Department knew nothing about the power-of-attorney frauds, that in not one single instance had these come before the department, and that the two decisions in which judges of the Supreme Court of Canada and the Supreme Court of B. C. had expressed strong opinions as to the frauds being committed on the Land Act were isolated cases. He closed, very impressively, by asking the Liberal leader a lot of questions which that gentleman had answered in advance in his speech.

John R. Jackson (Greenwood) spoke briefly, devoting his attention to the condition of agriculture in the Province, which he found to be very excellent, and he praised the Government for its policy in this regard.

John T. W. Place (Nanaimo) moved the adjournment of the debate.

Two to One.

Two Government speakers (S. A. Cawley, Chilliwack, and R. H. Pooley, Esquimalt) and one Socialist (T. W. Place, Nanaimo) had their say in the debate on the address, Monday, the 13th inst.

Mr. Cawley congratulsted the mover and seconder of the address, the new members, and Mr. Bowser, regretted the passing of Sir Richard McBride, and wished Hon. J. H. Turner well. He devoted some attention to agriculture and coupled with it mining, and said he coupled them because without one the other could not be developed. There was no province, he asserted, where more was done for the advancement of agriculture, according to means, than in British Columbia. Prohibition, Mr. Cawley said, would be very acceptable to the people of Chilliwack. But in whatever legislation was brought down there should be some measure of relief to hotelkeepers, whom the province had licensed to hold and carry certain stocks, and for the readjustment of their premises to meet with the new conditions bound to arise.

R. H. Pooley (Esquimalt) had praise for the French troops now fighting around Verdun, and expressed sympathy with the Serbians and Montenegrins, blaming the British Covernment for Serbia not now being in the hands of the allies. The House, he said, missed the face of Sir Richard McBride, the greatest native son the province had produced. It would be a long time before it saw another to equal him. Continuing, the member for Esquimalt expressed great admiration for the Government's shipbuilding policy, and foresees the time when it will be possible to build steel and iron ships here.

John T. W. Place, Nanaimo, called on the Premier to enlighten the House as to his attitude in regard to the business of the House in view of the vote of the electorate in the three by-elections. The sooner the Premier and his colleagues were out the better for the country. Repelling the allegations that the Liberals had brought men here from New York, Mr. Place said the Conservatives could go that one better, even if it had been true, for they went to the graveyard for voters as a practice. The member for Nanaimo declared himself an anti-militarist, but said he was prepared to go to any extent in looking after the welfare of the soldiers who returned from Europe, but wanted to know particulars of the Government's proposed land scheme in this connection.

Mr. M. A. Macdonald, Vancouver, moved the adjournment of the debate, which entitled him to open the debate the next sitting.

Something Happened!

A dramatic surprise was sprung in the Legislature when it assembled on the afternoon of Tuesday, March 14, which shunted the debate on the address on to a sidetrack and plunged the House into a hot discussion, which lasted until midnight, on the question of the life or death of the Legislature itself.

Premier and Attorney-General Bowser threw the bomb which started the eruption by bringing down by message a short bill extending the life of the present Legislature to June 1st next, and moving for the suspension of the rules of order so that the bill might be rushed through all its stages at once? He claimed emergency, that he had but recently discovered that, while he had believed the Legislature would not expire until June, there was a possibility that it would expire at 12 o'clock midnight on that day, March 14. Hence this bill to make sure.

It came out in the Premier's explanation and the debate which followed that the exact time of the expiration of the Legislature hinged upon the meaning of the words in the Constitution Act which fixes the term of the Legislature at "four years from the return of the first writs in the last election." Premier, also Attorney-General, Bowser admitted that the question had been giving him some concern since January last, but it had only recently come to his notice that the "return" in the case of the member for Chilliwack, Mr. S. A. Cawley, where the election was by acclamation, was made March 15, 1912, which would make the date of the expiration of the Legislature March 14, 1916. Mr. Bowser said that before bringing in this bill to extend the life of the Legislature to June 1st next, he had had a conference with Mr. Brewster and the other Opposition members and had offered, if they would consent to the extension, to put through only non-contentious measures and neceesary votes of supply. The Opposition, however, Mr. Bowser said, refused to consent, they wished to kill prohibition, said this great new found temperance champion, so he was determined to have nothing more to do with the Opposition, and would extend the life of the Legislature in spite of them.

Mr. Brewster, Mr. Macdonald and the other Opposition members showed, however, that among other allegedly "non-contentious" measures which Mr. Bowser in the conference said he was going to pass was legislation to provide a salary of $15,000 a year for Sir Richard McBride as Agent General (an increase from $10,000), together with a bonus of $5,000 to Mr. Turner for giving up the office to Sir Richard, as well as an annual pension of $6,000 to Mr. Turner and a pension of $3,000 to Mrs. Turner should she survive her husband. The Liberal leader, while agreeing that such a measure as the proposed prohibition referendum act was non-contentious and offering an extension of the Legislature to March 30 so as to pass that and other really non-contentious legislation, would not consent to Mr. Bowser's inclusion of the proposed McBride-Turner arrangement as "non-contentious" legislation, and the conference ended with the Opposition determined to oppose the barefaced attempt to railroad through, on false pretences, an unnecessary extension of the Legislature till June 1st to enable a condemned Administration to work its will before the people can get at it with the great axe which they used so effectively in Vancouver and Victoria.

The Opposition were enabled by their skill and pertinacity to prolong the debate in the House and prevent Mr. Bowser's bill passing until after 12 midnight on the 14th inst., so, even on his own showing, it is very questionable if legally there is any Legislature of British Columbia in existence to-day, though it is still doing business under Bowser's extension bill.

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