

OUR OTTAWA LETTER.

End of a Most Wearisome Discussion on Hon. Mr. Foster's Budget Speech.

Interesting Talks on Farming—Successful Fishing Seasons in British Columbia.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)
OTTAWA, Feb. 29.—Possibly the most wearisome discussion which has taken place in parliament since confederation closed last evening by the budget being disposed of and the house going into committee of supply. Hon. Mr. Foster delivered his budget speech on January 31, and it has taken fifteen sittings of the house to give it members all the time they required to blow off steam. Day after day the dreary talk has gone on, and often one has been tempted to ask, "What is the good of it all?" Of course, so far as a few members are concerned, the discussion has given them an opportunity to shoot off their one speech of the session, to get it embalmed in the pages of Hansard, reprinted in separate form, and then scatter it broadcast amongst their constituents. This is an old trick of back-bench parliamentarians, and in the country districts doubtless helps along the impression that their representatives in parliament are

A WONDERFUL SET OF MEN.

Tons of this class of literature, as well as blue books, reports, pamphlets, etc., are being sent out in view of the close proximity of the general elections. A certain class of literature which the members sent out is calculated to be of great benefit, especially to the farmers. During the last few years the members of the experimental farm staff have given interesting talks to the agricultural committee, and this evidence having been printed in pamphlet form brings directly to the attention of the farming community the benefits of the experience of the best men whom the country can secure to take charge of the experimental work at the farms. A lot of the reading matter going out, however, is of very little practical use and might just as well remain at Ottawa.

Inspector John McNab sends an interesting report to the Department on the

FISHERIES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

For the past year, which he characterizes as the most successful in the history of the province. The output of the salmon canneries exceeds 28,000,000 pounds, and the export of salmon, frozen and packed in ice, one million and a quarter pounds, the total, therefore, being about thirty million pounds. The export of fresh halibut reached two million pounds, and the inspector thinks that at least that quantity was caught in British Columbia waters by United States fishermen. Referring to the Fraser river run, Mr. McNab says that from the earliest period of the commercial fishery commenced on that river it has been maintained by packers and fishermen that every fourth year was similar in regard to the abundance or scarcity of salmon, counting from the first year after the one in question, and the theory advanced in support of the contention is the not unreasonable one that after a large run the spawning ground would be well planted with ova, which would produce mature salmon in four years, thus ensuring a corresponding "run." By referring to the table of the annual catch in the Fraser it appears that the large catch of 1889 was followed by the immense yield of 1893, and that the packs of 1890 and 1891 were followed four years later by increases of six and nine millions of pounds respectively, besides which the Point Roberts' pack must be credited to the Fraser river. The large increase in the number of salmon

CAUGHT IN THE FRASER RIVER

in late years is due to ascertainable causes, and in the Inspector's opinion is to be credited to the hatchery and to the fact that the destruction of the Indians on the spawning ground, and also their destructions of young salmon in the streams when descending from the lakes, has been kept more under control than formerly.

The Inspector reports that the catch of salmon on the Skeena river was again unsatisfactory. In all the Northern rivers it was a fair average. Much activity was manifested during the season in searching for streams and inlets where canneries could be established with a prospect of a sufficient supply of salmon to ensure a successful business. This year several new canneries were built as the result. Forty-seven canneries were operated during the season—30 on the Fraser, 16 on the Northern coast and 1 on the West coast of Vancouver island. The regulations gave very general satisfaction and were well observed. Most of the violations were of the weekly close time.

HIGH SCHOOL FEES.

For a short time past a petition to the legislature has been circulated for signature by a number of Victoria citizens who are opposed to the expressed intention of the school board to charge a tuition fee for the High school. The body of the petition sets forth: "That the board of school trustees of the City of Victoria have, to the detriment of education, availed themselves of the authority contained in section 38 of the school act, which authorizes the trustees to impose to impose a tuition fee on scholars attending High schools, and as the boards of school trustees of other cities do not avail themselves of the privileges conferred by the same section, the comparison shown is most disadvantageous to the city of Victoria: Wherefore, your petitioners humbly pray that your honorable body may be pleased to eliminate said section 38 from the school act, or to so hedge the said section about that trustees may not be able to impose a cruel disappointment upon the people by availing themselves of the authority contained in section 38 without first submitting their intention to the people for ratification."

This petition, signed by about four hundred names, was sent to the legislature yesterday.

Will be found an excellent remedy for sick headache, Catarrh of the Liver Pills. Thousands of letters from people who have used them prove this fact. Try them.

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE.

Second Session of the Seventh Parliament.

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY.

Monday, March 9, 1896.
The Speaker took the chair at 2 p. m. Prayers by Rev. Canon Beaudry.

Mr. McCREGOR presented an amended petition from the Miners' Protective Association against the school lands sale bill.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received a petition from a resident of Victoria asking permission to appear at the bar of the house to present a grievance. He wished to state, therefore, for the information of the public that the house had no power to grant such a request, as under the rules a petition can only be presented through a member.

Mr. EBERTS presented a return to an order of the house containing the evidence taken at the inquest on the death of John Rowe.

MAJOR MUTTER moved for a return of all timber leases granted in Cowichan-Alberni district to date, the acreage of each such lease; the duration of each lease; the terms on which each lease was granted; the names of the original lessees and their successors; the amount of money paid for the terms of lease. Agreed to.

MAJOR MUTTER moved the adoption of the report of the committee on dairying, recommending a bill providing for advancement of money to co-operative associations.

HON. MR. TURNER asked that this matter stand over, as he thought the report was not in order, because recommending an expenditure of public money.

Mr. HELMCKEN introduced a bill to amend the trustees and executors act. Read a first time.

On motion to adopt the report on the Langley municipality bill, Mr. KITCHEN again moved his amendment providing that appeals against the new roll authorized shall be heard before a court of revision instead of before a county court judge as contemplated by the bill. The amendment was lost on division and the bill was read a third time and passed.

ROSSLAND WATER AND LIGHT.

The house went into committee on the bill respecting the incorporation of the Rossland Water and Light Company (Mr. McGREGOR), with Mr. Kennedy in the chair. Discussion took place on that part of section 10 providing that the company may "divert and appropriate so much of the waters of Stoney creek, Little Stoney creek and Sheep creek as it shall consider necessary and proper."

Mr. HELMCKEN moved an amendment protecting the rights of persons already granted water privileges on these creeks. He said it had been stated before the private bills committee that there were no existing water rights but a precedent on the 15th of October, 1890, a pre-emptor at Stoney creek had been granted the right to 400 inches.

Mr. EBERTS said the only pre-emptor on Stoney creek that he had heard of was the owner of the townsite of Rossland.

Mr. HUNTER would like to be informed, what use was intended to be made by a pre-emptor at Rossland of a supply of water about four times as great as is required for the use of the city of Victoria. He reminded the house that the matter had been very thoroughly considered before the private bills committee, where these objections should have been brought forward.

Mr. KELLIE thought that the wool had been pulled over the eyes of the committee, and that the company was asking for much larger powers than they had given notice of.

Mr. SMITH as a member of the committee was not aware that any wool had been pulled over his eyes. He thought that the house might very well pass the bill as reported by the committee.

Mr. HUFF strongly protested against the position taken by some members of the private bills committee that the house should accept whatever they might report. He for one intended to freely exercise his own judgment.

Mr. KITCHEN remarked that the members interested in these bills should attend before the private bills committee and state their objections if they have any.

Mr. KELLIE said it sometimes happens that the presence of outside members is not desired by the private bills committee and that they are requested to withdraw.

Mr. KITCHEN denied that members of the legislature or persons interested in any bill are ever requested to withdraw except when the committee wish to discuss the principle of a bill.

The section was at length allowed to stand over for the present. The committee rose to report progress, having adopted all the sections except three or four reserved until next sitting.

The SPEAKER ruled, in the matter of the report of the select committee on the bill to encourage dairying, that it was not in order, as recommending an expenditure of public money. The recommendation of course would go to the government though the report could not be adopted.

PUBLICATION OF RETURNS.

MAJOR MUTTER, rising to a question of privilege, called attention to a paragraph in a report presented by Dr. Walkem on Friday as a report from the printing committee, and which said:

Your committee also beg to report that it is undesirable to allow the publication of returns or other papers by the printing committee, before those papers are laid on the desks of the members of this house.

This recommendation (which would delay for several days the publication of returns—such as for instance the British Pacific correspondence, and would prevent the publication of notices of motion until two days after they are handed in) Major Mutter as a member of the printing committee could not see any reason for. He wished to know whether the members of the committee were to be asked to suppress the publication of the house as supposed to remain.

The SPEAKER—the clerk of the house is the proper custodian of all papers.

Dr. WALKEM argued that the printing committee ought to say whether or not returns should be published and that it would not suit their convenience to have the documents in the custody of the clerk, because he is not in attendance in the morning.

Mr. KITCHEN had always understood that the returns were only for the benefit of the members until ordered printed.

Mr. HUNTER would like to know whether any particular circumstances were the root of this matter, and if so what it was. Any member in possession of the facts he thought ought to make a clean breast of them. (Laughter.)

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members of the printing committee thought he could explain. He believed that when the committee were making the report Major Mutter was engaged in another place, and neither he (Capt. Irving) present. In fact it seemed to have been a committee of one. (Laughter.)

The SPEAKER said he had been waited upon by a member of the press who laid the formal complaint that returns presented to the house had been taken possession of by Dr. Walkem as chairman of the printing committee, and that that hon. member had refused to allow access to them for the publication of their contents in the newspapers.

The public want the information just as much as the members of the legislature do. The government, he thought, might be depended upon to prevent the publication of returns which it might be advisable to put into the newspapers.

Mr. SEMLIN pointed out that the printing committee are not supposed to have anything to do with the newspapers. Their duty is simply to prepare the returns whether or not the documents submitted to them should be printed in the Sessional Papers.

The matter then dropped.

Mr. HANCOCK presented a petition from residents of Victoria for the repeal of the section of the school act authorizing the imposition of a high school fee.

The house went into committee on the Lillooet, Fraser River and Cariboo Gold Fields Co. bill, Dr. Walkem in the chair. The committee rose and reported progress.

The house adjourned at 5:40 p. m.

On motion to adopt the report on the Langley municipality bill, Mr. KITCHEN again moved his amendment providing that appeals against the new roll authorized shall be heard before a court of revision instead of before a county court judge as contemplated by the bill. The amendment was lost on division and the bill was read a third time and passed.

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HON. MR. EBERTS introduced a bill to amend the sheriffs act. Read a first time.

The house went into committee on the cattle bill (Mr. Graham) with Mr. Sword in the chair. Bill reported complete with amendments.

Mr. HELMCKEN introduced a bill to amend the Wages Act, 1894. Read a first time.

Mr. HELMCKEN asked, with respect to the ruling on the Consolidated Railway bill, what procedure should now be followed.

The SPEAKER said he would be prepared to meet the promoters at 11 o'clock to-morrow morning and point out what clauses should be amended to put the bill in order.

Mr. HELMCKEN said he would accept this invitation.

The house adjourned at 5:20 p. m.

ADVISE FURTHER NEGOTIATION.

A special meeting of the Council of the British Columbia Board of Trade was held yesterday morning for the purpose of giving consideration to the government's refusal to further entertain the proposition put forward by Mr. Rihet and his associates looking toward the construction of a railway from the coast to the interior.

President D. R. Kay was in the chair, and there were also present Messrs. T. S. Fletcher, B. W. Pearce, William Templeman, Joshua Davies, A. C. Flamerfelt, E. Pearson and Gustav Leiser.

The meeting was a private one but the result of the deliberations of the council was summed up in a resolution proposed by Mr. Fletcher, seconded by Mr. Pearce, and unanimously adopted.

To the effect that the secretary be authorized to communicate with the government and with Mr. Bodwell, counsel for the promoters, expressing as the unanimous sentiment of the council the desirability of continuing negotiations, in the hope that the block to the proceedings may be found to be only temporary, and that the object of the company, viz., the construction of a railway through Northern British Columbia to the East—with which all are in accord—may be ultimately accomplished.

JAPANESE MANUFACTURES.

Mr. F. M. Clark, who with Messrs. Sylvester and Goodman arrived from Japan on the steamship Victoria on Sunday and who remained over in the city until Sunday evening, a guest of the Dominion hotel, is among the first to venture opinion that Japanese manufactures will never come into active competition with those of America.

He bases his opinion upon his own observations upon his own visit to the way of Indian traditions. He also read an interesting letter from Father Brabant, who has been a missionary for twenty years on the West Coast, giving particulars of the traditions of the Indians in regard to the Spaniards, the historical significance of which is most important.

In his next Captain Walbran will give a paper dealing with Meares' narrative, which is the most graphic of all the accounts.

Dr. Newcombe submitted a number of fossil shells, nine or ten of which were new to science. Mr. Fannin exhibited two interesting specimens of fish; and three new marine shells.

Next Saturday a dredging expedition will be undertaken by the Natural History Society, and all who desire to take part may do so by leaving their names with Mr. Arncliffe, in Messrs. Braund & Co.'s store.

Attention is called to the fact that the next is the annual meeting of the society, when a large attendance of members is requested.

LONG OVERDUE.

PORT TOWNSEND, March 9.—(Special)—General alarm is manifested for the safety of two vessels, one bound to and the other from Puget sound. The H. A. M. bark Maudslayi, Capt. William Smith, which sailed from this port November 9 with a cargo of 555,600 feet of lumber, valued at \$6,000, is long overdue at Port Adelaide, Australia. The vessel is staunch and in charge of an experienced and skillful shipmaster thoroughly familiar with the passage between Puget Sound and the Colonies.

He had made a wager with Capt. Rasch, of the German bark Bertha, which sailed for the same destination 13 days later, and was determined to make a quick voyage, for which the Maudslayi is noted on the Pacific coast. The Bertha arrived at Port Adelaide on February 11, and reported experiencing severe gales.

The other overdue vessel is the British barkentine Xantippe, Captain McDonald, formerly of the ship Duke of Argyle, now out from San Jose de Guatemala 124 days. She was spoken December 20 in latitude 12° 28' and longitude 56° 24' west, and has not been heard from since. In those waters a vessel's bottom fons very easily, and there are facilities for drying, which may account for the long passage. Besides the barkentine is noted for being a slow sailer. A few years ago she loaded a cargo of lumber at Burrard Inlet for Europe, and was now chartered to load lumber at Tacoma.

All hope for the safety of the barkentine Discovery, which sailed from Port Gamble 53 days ago for San Francisco with a cargo of lumber, has been abandoned. It is said by some tugboat men that the cargo was not properly lashed when the vessel went to sea, which was at a time when the weather was very threatening and stormy.

The Discovery was a staunch craft, built at Port Discovery in 1874, and was owned by John Kentfield & Co., of San Francisco.

SPANISH PRIVATEERS.

LONDON, March 9.—The attention of the First Lord of the Treasury, A. J. Balfour, is to be called by T. G. Bowles, M. P. for King's Lynn, Conservative, to the statements in the Spanish press that in the event of war between Spain and the United States, Spanish privateers will prey upon American commerce.

Mr. Bowles will ask whether, in view of the complications and injuries which British trade would suffer in such an event, or in the case of a declaration of Great Britain and a country which has not acceded to the declaration of Paris, the government would consider the whole effect of the declaration of Paris, and the divisibility of Great Britain's withdrawing therefrom.

AYER, March 9.—A through freight train dashed into a rig at the Canadian Pacific railway crossing here. In the rig was a boy named Edward Jones. He and his horse were instantly killed.

THE SEMI-WEEKLY COLONIST, \$1.50

PIONEERS OF THE SEA.

Captain Walbran speaks of the Early Navigators of the North Pacific Coast

Their Enterprises Conducted in the Face of Numerous Difficulties and Many Dangers

At last evening's meeting of the Natural History Society Captain Walbran continued his very interesting and instructive paper on the early navigators of the Pacific coast, a subject upon which he is especially well qualified to speak with authority, as he has given it much study and practical research.

In his first paper the Captain gave a graphic description of all that is known of the life of the old Greek seaman, Juan de Fuca, after whom the well known strait received its name. A short account was also given of the cross staff, the earliest invention for measuring altitudes at sea and by which the early navigators had to ascertain their position on the world of waters, a drawing of one being shown.

Then the voyages of the Spanish navigators, Perez, Heesta, Maurelle and Quadra were related from 1774 to 1779, and it was stated how various places on the West Coast of this island and mainland Alaska were visited and named. The names, however, have since given way to those bestowed by Cook and Vancouver. The intrepidity of the Spanish seamen, Quadra and Maurelle in pursuing their voyage of discovery to the rough and stormy seas of these latitudes, in a small vessel of only thirty tons, when the larger and better equipped frigate under command of Bruno Heesta had turned back, and what these Spanish officers discovered in this little vessel, were dwelt upon. This paper, the first of the series, brought the account up to the arrival of Captain Cook off the cape which he named Flattery, and also told of the discovery of Nootka and how news of the wealth producing furs of these shores was spread throughout Europe, with a verbatim account of the interesting and important voyage of Captain Meares as told by himself.

Captain Walbran last night dealt mainly with the voyage of Capt. Cook, and incidentally submitted evidence of the priority of his visit at Nootka in the way of Indian traditions. He also read an interesting letter from Father Brabant, who has been a missionary for twenty years on the West Coast, giving particulars of the traditions of the Indians in regard to the Spaniards, the historical significance of which is most important.

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