# The Colonist.

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## THE NELSON & FORT SHEPPARD LAND GRANT.

Much has been said in the Kootenay press and in the house against the action of the Nelson & Fort Sheppard railway in cutting timber of land claimed by miners. Mr. Kellie went so far in the house yesterday as to say that the company's officers ought to be prosecuted as common thieves. Mr. Kellie undoubtedly felt justified in using this strong language, but, on consideration, he and any one else will see that it is uncalled for. We are not apologizing in any way for the Nelson & Fort Sheppard Railway Company. They may or they may not have exceeded their rights under their land subsidy, but this is a legal question, to be determined by the facts in each case, and in no case probably would their action be of a nature calling for the intervention of the Attorney-General. Whether in any particular case the timber on a piece of ground belongs to the company or the owner of the mining claim must depend upon whether the company or the claim owner was first to get a title. If a miner should go upon land which the company claims and cut timber after the land had been granted to the company, doing so under a claim of right by virtue of a crown grant antecedent to the date of the company's grant, it would hardly be contended that the Attorney-General should interfere and prosecute the miner "like a common thief." The Attorney-General, if appealed to by the company to do so, would probably tell it to look to the courts for its remedy by civil action. We cannot see how the case is altered because the company may happen to be the alleged trespasser.

With regard to the extension of time within which the Nelson & Fort Sheppard company may complete its surveys, it seems very unreasonable to insist that because the land is likely to be worth more now than anybody thought it was when the subsidy was passed, advantage should be taken of the fact that the company had been unable to complete its survey in the time specified in the act. As to the objection that it was not intended that the company should get 10,240 acres a mile, but only blocks 6x16 miles along their railway, we do not think that a fair interpretation of the Subsidy Act will warrant such a conclusion. It is easy to see how the intention of the Subsidy Act might be largely defeated, and a great injustice be done the men who advanced money on the strength of the land grant, if it were held that the company is not entitled to the full 10,240 acres a mile, but only so much as could be included within blocks of the frontage mentioned. If there were any doubt about the matter, which we submit there is not, the Province could better afford to lose 100,000 acres of land not yet surveyed than to adopt a line of action which might be justly termed repudiation.

## THE CASSIAR RAILWAY SCHEME.

The plan by which it is proposed to secure the opening of the Cassiar country by a line of railway is one that on consideration must commend itself to public opinion. The opposition in the house did not object to the principle of the bill, although freely criticizing some of its details. Not one of them came anything near the position taken by the Times last evening when it characterized the bill as outrageous. In fact the organ is sadly out of tune with its party in the house nowadays.

There is practically no difference of opinion as to the general principle involved in the bill. There may very naturally be some divergence of views as to details. On a question of this character it would be odd indeed if a house of thirty or more members should see eye to eye in every particular. It is right that those who think the details of this or any other measure can be improved should seek to amend it; but two things always ought to be kept in mind. One is that legislation of this character is in the nature of a contract between two individuals, and the legislature in granting powers ought first to learn if the grantee is likely to act upon them. If he is not it would be better to defeat a bill than to amend it so as to make it unacceptable. Another thing is that the government must be deemed to be responsible for legislation, and, while it possesses the confidence of the house, its judgment as to the desirability of provisions on which there is some dispute ought to be accepted by the house. Otherwise there is no one whom the people can hold responsible in case provisions inserted in legislation of this nature prove objectionable. It is a very common thing in legislatures for members to point out what they think are objections to measures and throw the onus of accepting or rejecting the proposed changes wholly upon the government.

## AN EXCELLENT RECORD.

It will be of public interest to review briefly some of the features of the last twelve months in provincial politics. Events succeed each other so rapidly in this Western country, and the public eye is so centered upon the material development of the Province that it is apt to lose sight of what has been done in the prosaic field of administration, and fail accurately to measure what is being accomplished in the more conspicuous arena of legislation. And yet an honest review of the political history of the last twelve months cannot fail to impress any one, whose judgment is not wholly warped by partizan prejudice, that the Hon. Mr. Turner and his colleagues richly deserve public confidence and support.

The last twelve months have been unprecedented in the history of British Columbia. The Province has enjoyed an era of remarkable mineral development, which has led to a great increase of population. Mining camps have sprung up, have developed as if by magic into towns, and even risen to the dignity of cities. This has necessitated the issuing of thousands of miners' licenses, the recording of thousands of claims, the construction of new roads, bridges and school houses, the policing of new communities and the establishment of machinery for the administration of the laws over a wide extent of country, much of it difficult of access and all filled with venturesome, determined men. This great task has been discharged without friction and without scandal. Persons familiar with life in mining towns in the United States never weary of praising the orderly and impartial manner in which the laws are administered and the government is carried on in the newly opened sections of this Province. The provincial ministers can point back with pride to the record of the year in this respect. If it does not bear testimony to the faithful and judicious exercise of ministerial powers, then nothing can. The first failure of justice has yet to be brought to light; the first instance of favoritism has yet to be disclosed; the first instance of negligence even has yet to be brought home to the government. We challenge successful contradiction of these statements.

We submit that this excellent showing is not the result of accident. It is the fruit of industry and an honest effort to do what is right. Much of the credit for the orderly condition of the mining districts is due to the people themselves; but the people well knew that the government stood ready with a strong hand to enforce the law and see that the right was done, and this knowledge has given a security to life and property in the mining camps of British Columbia which has never been equalled in the history of any such communities in America. We have made no claim of genius for the ministers, except the genius of hard work and honesty, and we think this will be conceded to them; but we might go further and claim that there has been a high type of statesmanship exhibited in the lightness yet firmness of the touch of government upon the mining districts. The iron hand in the velvet glove has been rarely better illustrated. The orderly and secure conditions prevailing in the communities referred to are a monument to the excellence of the administration of provincial affairs under circumstances without precedent in the history of the Province.

The work referred to have been in addition to the ordinary administration of affairs with which previous Provincial ministers have been charged, but the additional cost to the taxpayers has been small and the ordinary public service has been in no wise neglected. As an example, the institution of the Bureau of Mines may be cited. This invaluable department of the government has been organized and put in successful operation at very small cost. While this great additional responsibility has been cast upon the government, it has also had to deal with the erection of the parliament buildings, an important and troublesome piece of work, but of the manner in which it has been handled, the first adverse criticism has yet to be made.

In other lines important questions have arisen and been handled successfully, such as the determination of the ownership of the precious metals in the E. & N. railway grant, the right of the Province to tax the lands of the Victoria Lumber Company (previously decided adversely to the Province), and the settlement with the Dominion as to titles in the railway belt. The correspondence with the Dominion government as to the Songhees reserve has required much care. In addition to these things the administration of the criminal law, calling for the handling of over two hundred cases in the courts, has engaged the attention of the Attorney-General's department.

We ask impartial consideration for the record of administration, some of the salient points of which are indicated above. We claim it is a record which only needs to be understood and appreciated to gain for the ministers the confidence of the large majority of the people in every section of the Province. We point further to the fact that though the legislature has been many weeks in session, and though the fullest opportunity of investigation into every department of the government has been open to every member of the house, not a single instance of mal-administration or neglect has been brought home to the ministry. It is a splendid record, and we defy its impeachment.

When a review of the work accomplished comes to be written, the present session will be found to be the most notable one in the history of the Province. The immense volume of important public legislation which the government has passed or is prepared to lay before the house will hardly be appreciated until the laws have been published. The showing is monumental. We name some of the most important measures:

The Water Clauses Act.
The Companies Act.
The Companies Clauses Act.
The Lands Clauses Act.
The Farmers Institutes Act.
The Masters and Servants Act.
The Railway Aid Acts.
The Asylums Act.
The Small Debts Courts Act.
The Metalliferous Mines Act.

The list might be prolonged and other measures have yet to be brought down, some of which are of equal importance to most of the foregoing; but if nothing more were done than has already been accomplished, the present session would go into history as the most fruitful in valuable legislation since Confederation. We have not mentioned the revision of the statutes, for this was not prepared by the ministers, although the bill providing that the revision shall go into effect, subject to the enacting by the legislature at its next session of the new provisions, is a measure of great importance.

Turning briefly to the finances of the Province we find that these have been admirably administered. When the Finance Minister congratulated the house upon the favorable showing he was able to make he only did what the prosaic figures of the public accounts fully justify. For ten years the hon. Mr. Turner has held the portfolio of finance, and it is not too much to say that he has gained in that capacity the esteem and confidence even of his political opponents.

We congratulate the government upon the excellent record which the above facts discloses. And we especially congratulate the Province that at this critical period of its history its affairs have been in the hands of men so faithful and so fitted for their great responsibilities, and able, by the work of the present session, to give its development an impetus that will be felt for a generation to come.

## A QUESTION OF QUARANTINE.

We are all greatly interested in the proper enforcement of quarantine regulations. Much harm may be done by undue strictures, but more by laxity. The case of the Alice A. Leigh has attracted some attention. This ship was taken by the tug Tacoma off the Cape and towed to the Royal Roads, reaching there at 8 p.m. At sunrise the next morning she hoisted the quarantine flag. In the meantime the Tacoma had come into port. The Alice A. Leigh had, therefore, been in our waters for nearly 24 hours with several smallpox cases aboard without taking the trouble to notify the quarantine officer. The tug put out to sea without reporting at quarantine and being disinfected, as the quarantine regulations require. This is a very wrong state of things, but we do not know that the quarantine officer can be blamed for its occurrence. The Alice A. Leigh should have had her quarantine flag flying when she came in sight of the tug; but there does not appear to be any regulation requiring this. Rule 8 of the Quarantine Regulations says:

"Every vessel from any port outside of Canada requiring quarantine inspection shall, on arrival at any port in Canada, display a yellow flag at the fore for a distinctive quarantine signal in order to inform the quarantine officer that his services are required, and any vessel arriving by night shall display a red light at the fore for such signal."

The regulations provide that tugs which have towed vessels subject to quarantine shall themselves be liable to detention. It is obvious that no tug would take in tow a vessel flying the quarantine signal, except on special terms to provide against possible detention. An infected vessel is thus likely to refrain from displaying her quarantine signal as long as possible, and it may easily happen that a vessel with smallpox aboard may be taken in tow by a tug and taken past the quarantine station to the Royal Roads or elsewhere, and the tug may go about its business, thereby evading a provision which the quarantine regulations render compulsory. It is clear that if a vessel enters the Straits without any signal flying the master of a tug would be much less particular about approaching her than he would be if he knew she was subject to quarantine. This seems to be the weak point in the quarantine regulations. There appears to be no way of preventing the men on a tug from having close intercourse with an infected ship entering the Straits, and of coming directly into port without having been disinfected.

In the case of the Alice A. Leigh, according to the master's letter which we printed, she displayed no quarantine signal when approached by the Tacoma, and sailed by the station without a signal up. It was not until the next day that he hoisted the yellow flag. It was clearly his duty to have directed the Tacoma to have towed him into the station, and the conclusion seems to be that his reason for not doing so was that it would have cost more money for the service of the tug. We suggest that this matter needs looking into. We do not mean the conduct of the master of the Alice A. Leigh, for he appears to have violated none of the regulations, but the matter of signals. It seems as if the regulations should require a vessel subject to quarantine to hoist the yellow flag before taking a tow. There is a regulation that no vessel from an infected port bound to a port that is not a quarantine station shall pass a quarantine station without calling. We understand that this has been enlarged so as to compel every infected vessel entering the Royal Roads to report at the quarantine station in passing. A very much more valuable step would be to improve the means of communication with Carmanah Point so that the quarantine officer might be informed in advance as to what vessels were bound in so as to be able to intercept them and avoid delay.

## BAAL.

The Golden Age had ended. The earth was wrapped in the murky gloom of the Ice Age—that great winter when snow and ice were piled upon each other, like Ossa on Olympus, until the glaciers covered the mountain-tops. Cold and dismal days followed nights of pitchy blackness, for the sky was curtained with a perennial pall of vapor. Fire was a sacred thing, and esteemed more precious than life or honor. So holy was it that we find, long after the occasion for constantly guarding it had passed away, that it was deemed the highest honor for the daughters of patrician families to be chosen as priestesses to keep the sacred flame ever alive within the temples. There came a day when the clouds rolled away, and to the wondering eyes of the people, who had heard of his splendor from their fathers, who had in turn heard of it from theirs', the sun appeared in his majesty. Hope, which had been as dead in the human heart, awakened to new life. The reign of the Ice King was ended; the worship of the Sun-god began. Such in brief is the story gathered from a hundred myths.

Whether the above gives a correct account of the origin of Sun-worship, it has at least the merit of interest and probability. Sun-worship at a very remote age was the religion of the greater part, if not all, of the human race. We find it in India, Persia, Egypt, Phœnicia and in all the countries of Europe—including the British Isles—in America, and it was probably this cult of lost Atlantis. Later, the Sun became personified as Baal, and Bible students need not be reminded of the fact that for centuries there was a struggle in the Hebrew nation between the worship of God and that of Baal. It will be remembered that the Prophet Elijah waged a successful contest against the Baal-worshippers. The story of the fire-test is well known. The orgies attending that famous incident at Mount Carmel suggest the Tamanawis ceremonies of our Coast Indians. The four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal worked themselves into frenzy, slashing themselves with knives as they besought Baal to send a flame upon their altar, while Elijah stood alone, mocking their impotent ravings. But when Elijah prayed "the fire of the Lord fell from Heaven," and the wood for the sacrificial fire on his altar, though thrice soaked with water, was consumed and so was the water which filled the trench round about it. In the light of what may be called the suggestions of modern investigation less faith is required to accept this story as substantially true than was needed twenty-five years ago; but the reference to it is not to raise any question on this point, but to show what this Baal-worship was which the Jehovistic worship of the Jews supplanted.

Baal-worship was, therefore, Sun-worship, a pure materialism, but, as might be naturally expected, its absolute lack of any principle of individual responsibility led to its degenerating into grossness and sensuality. The Baal-worshippers achieved some of the most remarkable triumphs of merely material art that the world has ever seen. Perhaps it may be truthfully said that their work in this respect has been without a rival. The vast pyramids of Central America, the massive temples of Peru, the splendid architecture of Babylon, bear evidence to the skill of the followers of the Sun-god. On the other hand, the indescribable orgies and excesses which characterized Baal-worship were in their way as remarkable as the temples in which they were practised, and were themselves only the culmination of a social condition, which knew no law but that of brute force and no pleasure except those of the grosser senses. It was from a world sunk in these depths that Abraham was called of God to be the founder of a nation, the corner stone of whose polity was the existence of a Deity superior to yet immanent in material nature.

But the Jehovistic revival under Abraham was not the only effort on the part of humanity to rise above the grossness, if greatness of Baalism. Buddha in India, Zoraster in Persia, Confucius in China are conspicuous instances of leaders who sought to impress upon their fellows that there are more worthy ambitions than to keep up material evidences of power, better principles of action than the mere gratification of self. It remained, however, for Christ to put the motive for human action upon the highest possible plane, by subordinating the material wholly to the spiritual. He who said "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth," described his personal condition by saying "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." A more striking contrast with the licentious luxury of the priests of Baal in their temples, whose splendor the gnawing tooth of time has not wholly defaced in more than thirty centuries, cannot well be imagined.

This necessary brief and imperfect sketch may serve to cast some light upon what the prophets of old meant when they exhorted the people to turn from Baal and worship the only true God. Baal was not a rival deity to Jehovah, as he is often described. He was the personification of the sun—that is, of the forces of nature—in which the wisdom of a bygone age thought "it perceived all the potentialities necessary for every manifestation of life," to quote the language of one of the greatest of modern men of science. Baalism accepted as proved what modern science has put forward as a tentative suggestion. This thought casts some light upon what to most persons must have seemed the apparently inexplicable stupidity of the men who built the pyramids, the temples of Luxor, the great cities of Bashan and the countless other monuments of prehistoric magnificence. These men were not worshippers of the fantastic images which they set up; they placed no value upon the orgies and the frenzies of the priests. Such things did for the ignorant masses. The ruling classes were wholly materialistic.

We get also a suggestion of this sequence of events: a Golden Age, an Ice Age, a Materialistic Age, and a Spiritual Age. There is no sharp line of demarcation between the ages. We are living in the last named, for it cannot be successfully contended that the moral obligation of individuals towards each other is the dominant factor in our modern social organization.

## THE TARIFF.

The very brief reports yet received of the tariff changes render it not very easy to express any opinion about it, except to say that it favors importers and is likely to add to the revenue. It will probably crush out one industry, that of the rice mills, in which Victoria has some interest. There will probably be some changes made in the schedule before it is finally adopted. The instructions received at the Custom House bear out this view. There does not appear on the whole to be very much of a departure from the principle of protection; but on this point judgment must be reserved. The discrimination in favor of Great Britain, if it is calculated to have the desired effect, will be received very favorably both in the Mother Country and Canada. Speaking under reserve, we should say that the new schedule seems to go a long way towards rendering the tariff a non-partizan question.

## BY WAY OF VARIETY.

"No, I don't, send any stories to the Monthly Bugle. I sent them some once, and they returned them without reading."

"How do you know the stories were not read?"

"Because they were returned."—Indianapolis Journal.

Mistress—Oh, Bridget! Bridget! what an awful numskull you are. You've put the potatoes on the table with the skins on—right in front of our visitors too! You—you—what shall I call you?

Bridget (affably)—Call me "Agnes" if ye loike, mum; 'tis me other name.—New York World.

She (bitterly)—I wonder why it is woman has no charms for a man after she becomes his wife? He (more so)—Oh, I fancy she feels more comfortable with them off.—Detroit Journal.

He—They have a saying now that all the world's a wheel. She—To be sure it is. And it's a scorcher, too, whirling at the rate of more than 1,000 miles an hour.—Detroit Free Press.


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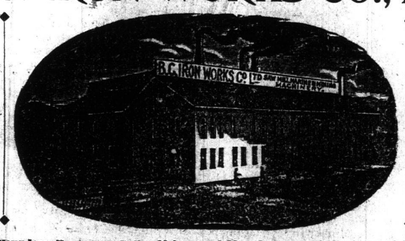


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