

A BROKEN PLEDGE.

The commissioner of lands and works does not lie on a bed of roses at present, although it is a bed of his own making. Just previous to his last election Mr. Martin gave a promise—none the less solemn and binding because it was a verbal one—that he would oppose any subsidy to the proposed line of railway from Victoria via Butte Inlet to Cariboo and known as the British Pacific. There were present at the meeting at which this promise was given Messrs. Marpole, Mara, Macintosh and Martin, representing the government, and Messrs. Semlin and Sward, representing the opposition. The pledge was given by Mr. Martin to avoid a contest, and in consequence of that promise he was not opposed. It was a piece of political diplomacy of a not very high order, and its ultimate failure, in consequence of the party of the first part refusing to be bound by the solemn pledge given in Mr. Mara's house at Kamloops, will probably be viewed by Mr. Martin and his friends as the cleverest piece of work that the commissioner has yet placed to his credit. Mr. Martin, apparently, got "the best" of the opposition leaders, but at a terrible cost. He won, for the present at least, by being untrue to his pledge, which is considered among honest men, if not among British Columbia cabinet ministers, an unpardonable sin.

AT MONDAY'S MEETING.

The railway bill will be considered in committee of the house on Monday, when it is probable the erratic "policy" will be subjected to further emendations at the hands of the government, who are not quite certain that they have yet struck the popular chord. Mr. Smith, of Lillooet, has given notice of an amendment to change the grant from Ashcroft to Quesnelle, which, if carried, will be the death-blow of the emasculated British Pacific line. Mr. Holmbeck, influenced by the arguments of the opposition, will propose an addition of the clause giving the government power to purchase the railways aided. An interesting discussion is anticipated, and it is not unlikely that the patched-up policy will be so amended that even the premier may feel inclined to disown his offspring. Public opinion, as expressed at public meetings is, fortunately, a potent influence in shaping, transforming and reversing the "policy" of the government, evidence of which was supplied by the abandonment of the cities-commissioners bill a few years ago, and, in the present case, by the radical change of front in respect to the Coast-Kootenay line. A crowd in the galleries, or a hot opposition meeting at the city hall, are powerful influences when a weak and unstable hand is guiding the destinies of the province.

THEY ARE "IN ON IT."

The attorney-general's denial of the charge that his firm was counsel for the Columbia & Western—a beneficiary of the province—is accepted as satisfactory by his friends. Mr. Eberts' partner had acted for the Union Trust Company in filing the mortgage given by the Columbia & Western, and had acted as counsel for Mr. Heinze's smelting company in several trifling actions, but that was the extent of the attorney-general's offending. As he will probably be more careful in the future, very little need be said against the attorney-general for what does not appear to have been more than an indiscretion. Mr. Pooley did not deny anything. He is the paid counsel of the E. & N. railway, while Col. Baker's wriggling only fastened the charge of charter-mongering more strongly upon him. Mr. Forster made good his point, which was that members of the government being personally interested in the success of private railway schemes would consequently be opposed to the policy of government control or ownership of railways.

THE MARKET BUILDING.

The market building has not fulfilled the expectations of its promoters. It has been, as a matter of fact, a dismal failure in so far as its raison d'être was to bring together buyer and seller of farm and garden products. The cost to the city has been out of all proportion to the resultant advantages. Neither the farmer, the gardener nor the citizen has derived any benefit from the expenditure, and the large structure on Comorant street remains a silent but impressive witness of the credulity of the taxpayer—a receptacle for anything and everything save those things for which its commodious and well-appointed rooms were designed.

A movement, originating with the District Fruitgrowers' Association, is on foot to reclaim the market building from its unfortunate fate of general store-house for odds and ends, and to make it the meeting place, as it was intended to be, of buyers and sellers of farm products of all kinds. To this end the council have been asked to prohibit peddling before 11 a.m. each day, or failing this that one or more days in the week be set aside as market days, when peddling would be entirely suspended. The producers will undertake to supply the market with farm products and fruits of all kind in season during the hours that peddling is prohibited. This is the proposition, and as it emanates from the farmers of the district, who alone can make it a success, we think an earnest attempt ought to be made to give it effect. One of the difficulties of house-keeping in Victoria is the uncertain supply,

by white gardeners, of vegetables of any kind. Chinese peddlers are numerous enough to vex the soul of every housekeeper, but in hundreds of the best homes of the city the "forced" wares of these industrious merchants are not used. Those families are, therefore, compelled to do their own marketing, and frequently have to do without luxuries in the vegetable line because of the irregularity of the supply by white peddlers. Every lady in the city has experienced the petty annoyances and worries incident to an inadequate and uncertain service and will welcome any change that offers release from her present dependence upon the unspeakable John, who has practically driven the white peddler from the city.

We trust the council will give the matter careful consideration and assist the experiment suggested by the farmers. Success, however, will largely rest with the producers, who must place themselves in a position to supply the wants of our housekeepers both in respect to quality and price. If they are prepared to do this they ought to be given the chance.

MR. TURNER'S TELEGRAM.

Since the telegrams sent by the premier to the different Mainland centres had not the desired influence upon the vote on the second reading of the Railway Aid bill, there is probably no one who will regret that those telegrams were sent more than Mr. Turner. It was such a contemptible trick for the premier of the province, that if he has any respect for the dignity of the office he holds he must be heartily ashamed of his conduct. If Mr. Turner were not sheltered by the privileges of the house he would be a fit subject for the punishment which he considered should be administered to the editor of the Rossland Mining Review. The latter gentleman's only crime is to call the government thieves and robbers, but Mr. Turner is guilty of deliberately attempting to influence the vote in the house through the agency of a misleading telegram. His telegram was couched in such language that it would have a tendency to influence the voters of the Mainland in bringing pressure to bear upon the members to vote for a measure which they honestly believed was not in the interests of the province. The premier's conduct, while characteristic of Mr. Turner, brings his important office into contempt. When the premier of British Columbia has to resort to the trick of a political mountebank in order to carry out the measures of his government, the sooner he is forced to step down and out the better it will be for the province. Even the constituency which was left unrepresented by the death of a member who was always strong in his denunciation of such conduct as the premier's, was, in Mr. Turner's opinion, not to be left unprotected. Mr. Cawley, the defeated government candidate in Chilliwack, succeeded in getting twenty-three residents of the district to act as his suggested. When the electors of Chilliwack discover that the premier was deliberately attempting to mislead them, they will feel grateful to Mr. Sward for his many words in their behalf.

There is another side to this telegram which is not at all flattering to Mr. Rithet or the citizens of Victoria. The telegram reads as follows: "Opposition members opposing bill providing subsidy coast to Pentticon. There is no British Pacific in this. They required \$240,000; this is only about \$80,000. Opposition action will tend to prevent Dominion subsidy. Instruct members before 3 o'clock Thursday." If there is no British Pacific in the bill, Mr. Turner was deliberately broken the promises made to the electors of Victoria during the last provincial campaign, and he has turned traitor to Mr. Rithet, the political Atlas, who carried a discredited government into power. Mr. Rithet in justice to himself should demand a public explanation of the premier's telegram. He was given a seat in parliament by the electors of Victoria solely because he was interested in and a strong advocate of the British Pacific railway. Now Mr. Rithet is found assisting Mr. Turner to pass a bill in which there is no British Pacific. If there is no British Pacific in the bill then Messrs. Turner and Rithet stand convicted of breaking their promises to the electors which returned them to power. If the British Pacific is in the bill then the premier is guilty of deliberately attempting to mislead the people of the Mainland. Looking at the telegram from any point of view, it must be characterized as a most contemptible piece of political sharp practice.

Mr. Smith, one of the members for Lillooet who refused to vote for the railway aid bill because the British Pacific was in it, has given notice of an amendment to transfer the aid for a road from Butte Inlet to Quesnelle. This amendment furnishes the premier with a splendid opportunity of substantiating the truthfulness of his telegram. If he votes for Mr. Smith's amendment the Mainland people will be fully convinced that there is no British Pacific in the bill. Since there is no British Pacific in the bill, the people of Victoria will be indifferent as to whether Mr. Smith's amendment is carried or defeated.

The editor of the Rossland Mining Review, who in writing of the local government, "called a spade a spade" with

such an excess of boldness that the Colonist was horrified, would have as his political fortune made in the advice, or the organ to publish him for contempt, were carried out. He might then become a candidate for no-nonsense and be elected by a large majority. There is nothing that will popularize a man in a more effective way than to make him a subject of contempt for the public mind. The public will excuse the too not words of a fervent denunciations of wrong-doing much more readily than the mealy-mouthed apologies of the organs that defend charter-mongering and the promotion of stock gambling by the use of names that are of value simply for the official positions their owners occupy.

The late quarantine officer, who was dismissed by the Liberal government, still has access, through the editor, to the columns of the Colonist. Periodically, therefore, we may expect to read malevolent paragraphs about the administration of the quarantine law and regulations by Dr. Watt. Some facts in connection with the quarantine station, its efficiency and equipment, and the manner in which the regulations were enforced under the late official, have yet to be made public.

The Wellington Enterprise, discussing the revelations in connection with the Columbia & Western Railway company and certain high officials, says: "It must also be borne in mind that our Lieut.-Governor forsook his duties during the course of last summer and spent some time in England in trying to float a loan. That he was unsuccessful was not his fault, but what we have to particularly call the attention of the public to is that many of the clauses of the Columbia & Western railway charter contain provisions which allow of certain things in connection with the company to be determined and settled upon by the Lieut.-Governor-in-Council. This was put in the charter by the house of assembly, who in doing so expressed their confidence in the proper administration of the power given to the Lieut.-Governor-in-Council. To make this connection of the Lieut.-Governor with the company as a director the more startling, it has also leaked out that Messrs. Eberts & Taylor are the solicitors for the company, and as such actually appeared in court to object to the payment of the fees payable on registration of \$75,000 worth of first mortgage bonds upon the road. It is indeed high time that the people aware in their words and hurled from power a ministry who are caught red-handed winking at such scandalous transactions."

THE RAILWAY CRISIS.

Mr. Smith's amendment to the railway aid bill has forced the Colonist to consider the almost irretrievable position in which the province will be placed by the Turner government's railway policy. The Colonist says: "If Mr. Smith's amendment should carry and the bill should become law in that shape, the development of the whole interior would be placed in the control of the Canadian Pacific. That company will get the Crown's Nest Pass railway. If it can get a government subsidy for a line into Cariboo, it only needs to secure in some way in the Pacific-Boarder subsidy to have a monopoly of transportation in British Columbia. The Colonist is in no sense hostile to the Canadian Pacific, which it recognizes as a great and valuable institution, but it could not view with equanimity the consummation of an arrangement which would make it the sole arbiter of the future of interior British Columbia. This question rises above party politics or sectional prejudices. We do not anticipate that Mr. Smith will succeed in his motion, but think it advisable not to allow the question to come before the house without pointing out plainly what is involved in it."

We fully endorse every word of the above except from the Colonist, but we cannot agree that the evil suggested can be prevented by a policy of voting the people's money to anyone who is in a position to build a railway. To prevent the C.P.R. becoming the arbiter of the future of British Columbia, a strong railway policy must be inaugurated—such a policy was outlined by the Opposition in the debate on the second reading of the railway aid bill. Whether the policy of state-ownership of railways is a proper one under all

circumstances need not be discussed here, but we hold that the past acts of a designing government and a pliable legislature have placed the province in such a position that the one only hope for relief from the maw of the C.P.R. is to strike out for ourselves and either build our own railways, or, until that may be done safely, retain an interest in and control of every railway subsidized by the province.

Some years ago, through the influence of a member of parliament, a company secured a charter to build a railway through Crow's Nest Pass. That charter was afterwards extended so that the company could build a railway from Crow's Nest Pass to the Coast. An enormous land grant carrying valuable coal deposits was also given to the company. The member of parliament, who had become the provincial secretary of the province, went East at the expense of the province, and sold to the C.P.R. company the charter and the company's right in the land grant. The same government gave to the Columbia & Western Railway Company another enormous land grant, and the manager of this company is, according to reports, ready to sell to the C.P.R. for a consideration. The Turner administration is now seeking to secure the necessary authority to borrow \$200,000 for 250 miles of railway from the Coast to Pentticon, and \$400,000 for 100 miles from Pentticon to Boundary. This money is to be given to any company who will build the railway. What is to prevent the C.P.R. from building the road? It has control of the B. C. Southern land grant; it has, or can secure, the Columbia & Western land grant. It can secure \$1,300,000 of provincial money whenever it builds the road. Is there any other company in a better position than the C.P.R. to build the Coast-Kootenay road? If the government's railway policy becomes effective, then, will the C.P.R. be in a position to become the sole arbiter of the future of southern British Columbia.

The situation is that should not be discussed from a party standpoint, nor should the policy of the government be influenced by the importunities of private companies. The situation is so critical that it would require the earnest attention of a strong government, such as, unfortunately, the province does not now possess. If public opinion were aroused, however, to a due appreciation of the probable result of the passage of the railway aid bill, the weak government could be forced to change its policy so that the prosperity of the province would not be subject to the interests of a railway monopoly.

This question must also be looked at from a national standpoint. The members of the government have clearly outlined as an important part of their railway policy that a rail will be made on the Dominion treasury to the extent of \$8,000 a mile. It is almost useless appealing to the present provincial government. It has always considered the interests of private companies paramount to those of the people, but we have greater confidence in the federal government. It is composed of men who will not consent to give the C.P.R. or any other railway company the money that has been filched from the pockets of the people of British Columbia through the agency of an unrighteous tariff until such conditions are imposed as will prevent the establishment of an other oppressive railway monopoly in the province.

The Colonist was wrong when it states that the Times spoke approvingly of the attack made on the members of the government by the Rossland Mining Record. What the Times did do was to speak disapprovingly of the members of the government whose conduct provoked such an attack.

In the house this afternoon Mr. Smith's amendment to the railway loan bill was defeated on a vote of 11 to 17. Mr. Smith's proposal was to substitute a railway from Ashcroft to Quesnelle for the road from Butte Inlet to Quesnelle as the recipient of \$4,000 a mile. The opposition members and Messrs. Smith and Stoddart voted for the amendment; Mr. Forster was absent.

The Turner government. To the Editor: I read some time ago in your valuable paper that a convention of the opposition should be called by Mr. Semlin before the M.P.P.'s departure for their respective homes. I would suggest to Mr. Semlin, the leader of the opposition, that due notice should be given in the Times, and he can rest assured that Cowichan delegates will be on hand to assist in framing a progressive platform that will be acceptable to the people of the province.

The Turner or Mongolian government will very shortly be a thing of the past; they have utterly failed to come up to expectations. They have fostered monopolies; they are lovers of the Mongolian race to the detriment of the laboring masses. They have run the province in debt and squandered the money; they have advanced salaries in times of depression, when a reduction should have been made. They have kept an agency general in London at an expense to the province when no one was required. They have Mr. Pooley president of the council when he has no business to be there. There are a few of the wrongs that were pending waiting a bill to be passed. What did we get? A more shallow nothing-in-it bill could scarcely have been brought down. It gives us the privilege of forming "barons' institute, and if one of us has more money than the rest they give us

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permission to loan it out among ourselves. Very kind indeed.

We are told the government have pledged themselves not to borrow any more money for three years, but when the great higher wants money for his railway that is another thing altogether.

One, thing I would like to ask Mr. Rithet. Does he intend to put two hundred white families yearly to settle up on lands of the British Pacific to compete with his darling Mongolians? I have heard that the Colonist stated that the Turner government were more than ready to give the C.P.R. the money to build the railway. What is to prevent the C.P.R. from building the road? It has control of the B. C. Southern land grant; it has, or can secure, the Columbia & Western land grant. It can secure \$1,300,000 of provincial money whenever it builds the road. Is there any other company in a better position than the C.P.R. to build the Coast-Kootenay road? If the government's railway policy becomes effective, then, will the C.P.R. be in a position to become the sole arbiter of the future of southern British Columbia.

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hard times is self-evident. The savings secured by the use of electric power is so considerable that ordinary production has, in many cases, demanded in the age that covered under such conditions as have recently prevailed, the whole difference between profit and loss. This has been especially the case in regard to mining plants situated where coal is very expensive and water power is plentiful. A sample instance is cited in which an electric installation for mining purposes has paid for itself at the rate of five per cent. a year.

But, remarkable as has been the advantages already made in the development by electricity of the natural power resources of the country, we are still only at the beginning of this movement. Every year seems to add something to the distance that can be successfully overcome in power transmission. California led the way in power transmission, the longest distance lighting plant from the generating station in San Francisco to Pomona and San Bernardino being the most important of the kind attempted up to 1908. Two years later what is known as the Poloma-Sacramento three-phase plant went into operation, furnishing all the power "three miles away and making the longest commercial transmission that had yet been installed. Still later came the transmission of electrical power over a distance of thirty-five miles into Fresno. This bears the record so far as the longest commercial transmission yet accomplished, the line from Niagara to Buffalo being eight miles shorter. Of course, with every advance in the development of the commercial possibilities of the employment of electrical power becomes enormously widened. This fact has a bearing not only on the possibility of utilizing the 5,000,000 hydraulic horse power available in this country, but also on that of converting the great and theorectic energy leaps into electricity, and making the coal mines themselves the seat of great generating stations whence power might be transmitted over a wide area of surrounding territory.—Boston Herald.

RAILWAYS OF THE TRANSVAAL.

One of the most serious grievances of the Transvaal or foreign mining element in the South African republic complained of, was the extensive scale of charges for railroad transportation within the country. The railroad system of the Transvaal, it is well known, was constructed by a corporation known as the Netherlands Railway, which was established and financed and is owned mainly by Hollanders and Germans. The Transvaal government itself has a large but not a controlling interest in the company, amounting to 5,700 shares out of the total number of 14,000. The paid-up shares are 1,000 guilders, or in the neighborhood of \$415 each, and the aggregate share capital is just about \$5,800,000. The length of the lines, according to the latest statistics available, is 615 miles, but as considerable extension work has been in progress, this mileage is doubtless larger at the present time.

Figures given in a recent issue of the London Statist would tend to show that the complaints of the Uitlanders are well founded. It is obvious that there is no community of interest between the Dutch owners of the Netherlands railroad and the mining interests, and as the journal from which these facts are extracted does not fail to point out, the government itself is not in a position to control the policy of the railways. It was, indeed, recently stated that some reductions had been made in its tariffs, but various statements can be recalled both to the very imperfect way in which the railroads are worked and to the glaringly high charges it exacts. It is indeed stated that, compared with the rates on the railroad of the Cape Colony, those of the Netherlands railroad are four times as much per mile, and instances are cited in which it is alleged that the cost of transporting articles over the short branch of fifty-two miles from the Transvaal border to the city of Johannesburg exceeded the entire charge for the long haul from Cape town to the frontier of the republic.

A rather peculiar arrangement exists between the railroad and the government. The former assumes the task of collecting the customs duties on imports and accounts for the same to the government, though, as the duties are light, the amount is not large. The duties are, however, included in the revenue of the roads, which in 1905, the last year reported, amounted to just \$8,200,000. The operating expenses of the same year were \$3,500,000, and the net, after deducting \$775,000 carried over as reserve, was about \$3,900,000. Income on bonds and guaranteed dividends amounted to \$1,800,000, leaving \$1,775,000 for distribution. By another peculiarity of the concession the government is paid 10 per cent. of this surplus revenue, while the shareholders received 10 per cent. of the government share, including the 8 per cent. above referred to, and its dividends on its stockholdings thus reached \$1,610,000. It is hardly necessary to say that the concession expires in 1915, and that the government may at any time exercise the privilege of buying out the shareholders by giving twelve months' notice.

It is thus every inducement for the company to pay as large dividends as possible, which doubtless accounts for the excessive scale of charges exacted for the transportation of the mining interests of the Transvaal.

ELECTRICAL PROGRESS.

During the last two years, when other branches of business have been standing still, the electrical distribution of power has grown as it never grew before. The development of electrical railways in the United States is the product of the last ten years. In 1887 there were only thirteen such roads, with barely 100 cars. Writing two years ago, an electrical engineer estimated that there were then 350 electrical roads, operating over 9,000 miles of track and 23,000 cars, and representing an investment of capital of over \$400,000,000. Another professional authority, writing the other day, places the present electrical railway mileage at 18,000 miles of track, equipped with not less than 30,000 motor cars. The railway motors at present in aggregate fully 1,000,000 horse-power, and the generating plants close to 500,000. Last year's contribution to electric railway construction was 1,900 miles of track and nearly 5,000 motor cars. It is stated that this increase means an aggregate investment of something like \$35,000,000, a very respectable sum to be added to a single industry in a year so little remarkable for industrial expansion.

The authority last quoted—Dr. Bell of Newton Centre—estimates the probable total of stationary electric motors operated by central or scattered stations and power transmission plants at 250,000 horse-power. Including railway work, he thinks it is safe to say that the great power of the electric engines in use in the United States is at least not less than 1,250,000 horse-power. Comparing such a list with the small group of power plants that were running five years ago, the strength of the business that has scored such gains in

FIERCE FIGHTING ON THE FRONT.

The Greeks Capture Many Turkish Positions and Destroy Forts.

Germany and Russian Officers To Be Coaching the Turkish Army.

Prayers for the Success of the Offered in the Cathedral at Athens.

London, April 19.—The new outbreak of hostilities on the frontier caused little surprise. Prominent officials at the Turkish embassy have received no information beyond the fact that war had broken out.

The correspondent of the Times Press understands that the Greek idea of territorial conquest is still alive, and that the powers will not advance upon Athens. It is that one will first attempt to take Larissa, then march on to Thessalonica. If these are the Greek demands, the powers will not be in a position to compel the Greeks to continue the war, however. It will likely result, however, in a Greek victory, as the Greeks continue to be represented that the power from blockading Greek ports, particularly at Greece if he decides to say case the Greek fleet will harass Turkey at many points in addition keeping open the ports and munitions for a year.

The latest advices from Athens are that the Greeks have been for three days of hot fighting, and that the Greek fleet, which alone the opposing armies, is rapidly increasing. The hill roads are impassable. It is at this point, however, that the Greeks are most severely and decisively fighting. Another question is whether the Greek engineers are up to the task of engineering an uprising in the Aegean islands. Mr. Germany, meanwhile, will not test to Greece and Turkey each other for many years to long as the other Balkan states.

A dispatch to the Daily from Athens, dated midnight, Greeks have captured Menax, a very heavy, the Greeks' only light. The correspondent adds: Greek fleet destroyed one-half fortress at Preveza and silent for guns. I am assured that the Greeks have captured the city of day morning. The latest news tonight is that the Greeks have taken and are holding all the except Am and Milon along the Salina line. An important document from a capital showing that the power done nothing for several weeks, they hoped that they would be financially ruined or soundly by Turkey. It was Germany urged Turkey to declare war.

London, April 19.—The Athens correspondent of the Times says: "The latest news tonight 11 p.m.) is that the Turks' ground at Menax. All the volunteers of the region and the volunteers of the started for Volo to-day. It that the communication from Day to M. Skouzes does not speak of any events that may be the Turkish government spokesman. It is now certain, however, Etilim Pasha received order the day following the 10th of But these orders were cancelled hours later.

In the 15th Prince Mau warned the government that it was preparing to order a without a previous declaration. It is inferred from these facts that two great powers may in the hostilities, and the presence of German officers with the troops is bitterly commented on.

A dispatch to the Times from Athens says the Greek consul town this (Sunday) evening of and there is no news yet received from the front. The Greek troops were engaged except services.

Prince Pasha, who was killed on the frontier in the Crimean war of 1877.

Athens, April 19.—(a.m.)—The Greek government has addressed a note to the Turkish government, expressing surprise at the actions contained in his note to the Greek government, and pointing to the fact that Turkey is the aggressor. The Greek government disclaims any responsibility for the actions of the Greek army, and states that the Greek army is now engaged in the defense of the Greek frontier.

Corfu, April 19.—Furious fighting is in progress since yesterday on the frontier near Arta. The Turkish general sent by Emperor to inspect the armies on the frontier has been killed. The Turkish army is now engaged in the defense of the Greek frontier.

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