PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE.

Second Session of the Sixth Parliament.

THIRTY-FIRST DAY.

MONDAY, March 21, 1892.

The Speaker took the chair at 2 o'clock.

RETURN BROUGHT DOWN.

HON. MR. ROBSON presented a return showing average attendance of Victoria schools for months of January and February.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.

COL. BAKER, from the Standing Orders and Private Bills committee, reported the bill to incorporate the Canadian Northern Railway.

Report received.

MUNICIPAL BILLS.

The House went into Committee of the Whole on Municipal Bills Nos. 21 and 27, Mr. McKenzie in the chair.

On the discussion of section 11 (bill 27) *re* issuance of liquor license,

HON. MR. BEAVEN opposed the proposed innovation which would place the granting of licenses in the hands of the Board of Police Commissioners. The present system, he said, had only been in operation a short time, and worked fairly well.

HON. MR. DAVIE maintained that under the new order of things there would be much better system and more stability in the plan of issuing licenses. The Mayor would be chairman of the Board.

HON. MR. BEAVEN held that the present constitution of the Board gave the people who had a direct interest in the license business, a certain control of the court. There was now a direct opportunity for those who had an interest on the Board to say who two of the members of that Board would be at any rate. He did not think it would be possible to improve on that Board, and the Attorney-General would be acting in the true interests of Municipal Government if he left the Board as it was.

HON. MR. DAVIE said it was obvious that certain changes must be made, whether in the method he proposed or in some other way. He was willing to withdraw the amendment proposed, and bring in some other one later on.

MR. COTTON said that the present system in vogue in Vancouver, worked well. The Mayor was Chairman, two representatives were elected by the people, and two were appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

HON. MR. DAVIE thought perhaps this would be a good scheme to adopt for Victoria. What he (Mr. Davie) wanted, was a stationary board, which would not act altogether on caprice.

The proposed amendment was dropped for the time being.

Section 19 of Hon. Mr. Davie's bill created some considerable discussion. The clause, as proposed, reads:

19. Section 194 of the "Municipal Act, 1891," is hereby repealed and the following section and sub sections are substituted therefor:

"194. Every license for the sale of liquor within a municipality shall be granted and issued to the licensee in respect only of the premises mentioned in the license, and such license shall be deemed to be an appurtenance of the premises and not to be severable therefrom; and a tenant's right thereto, or to carry on business thereunder, shall cease on the determination of his tenancy;

"(1.) Upon the determination of a tenancy of premises licensed as aforesaid the license shall devolve upon the owner of the premises, and it shall be lawful for him to assign the license to the incoming tenant who, subject as hereinafter stated, shall have the same rights, including that of renewal, of the previous tenant and licensee, but such assignment must, subject to the provisions as to temporary permission contained in section 183, as amended by the "Municipal Act Amendment Act, 1892," be ratified and approved by the Board of Licensing Commissioners;

"(2.) No person licensed to sell liquor under authority of sub-section (1) or (2) or (3) or (5), of section 166 of this Act, shall carry on such business, under such license, in any other premises except the premises named in such license, under a penalty not exceeding the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars for every such violation of this Act."

The tendency of the discussion was that the Legislature, in any action taken, should not recognize a vested right in a license.

HON. MR. DAVIE said that, while there was no intention to establish a vested right, it must be understood that a certain prior right must be recognized. He proposed to put in an amendment that there should be no vested right. But the rights of the owner of the property must be affected.

MR. KITCHEN thought it was merely a piece of sharp practice on the part of the Attorney-General to get a vested right in a license for a certain piece of property of which he was the owner. Let the license law, he said, remain as it is.

HON. MR. DAVIE replied that he would be sorry, indeed, that any member of the House should be accused of personal legislation. As a matter of fact he (Mr. Davie) did have an interest in a building in Victoria which was already leased with the condition that there should be a license granted. If the present lease were allowed to lapse and become void he could immediately get a new lease from another tenant at 25 per cent. better rental.

After further discussion the amendment was carried by a vote of 17 to 9.

After passing some minor amendments the committee rose, reported progress and asked leave to sit again.

DEEP SEA FISHERIES.

HON. MR. ROBSON brought down a message from His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor transmitting No. 61 and 62, viz.: (1.) An Act to authorize an agreement with Her Majesty's Government for the settling of fishermen and others in British Columbia; and (2) an Act to Encourage the Deep Sea Fisheries of British Columbia.

HON. MR. ROBSON moved, seconded by Hon. Mr. Turner, that the House do go into Committee of the Whole on Tuesday to consider the message of His Honor the Lieut.-Governor. Carried.

The House adjourned at 6 o'clock.

THIRTY-SECOND DAY.

TUESDAY, March 22, 1892.

The Speaker took the chair at 2 o'clock.

PETITIONS.

Petitions were read and received from residents of Surrey *re* validation of debentures, and from certain mechanics of the city of Victoria asking for legislation to protect scaffolding.

THE CROFTER BILLS.

The House went into Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 61, an Act to authorize an agreement with Her Majesty's Government for the settling of fishermen and others in British Columbia.

HON. MR. BEAVEN and other members of the Opposition wished to have information about the Crofter bills. Mr. Beaven claimed that unless the Government gave full information, the other members of the House would be in no position to intelligently discuss the measure. After a prolonged discussion the committee rose and reported the bill.

Bill No. 62, an Act to encourage the deep sea fisheries of British Columbia, was also committed and reported.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

MR. MARTIN rose to a question of privilege. He drew the attention of the House to a scandalous article which had appeared in the Daily Columbian, of March 17th, under the head of "Outrageous presumption." Such articles were, he said, most uncalled for, and the man who could, and would, write such stuff, was a disgrace to journalism. He read some of the passages in the article. In one place the editor said, "and the acme of rottenness and impudence was reached on Tuesday last when the Private Bills committee reported to the House that they had decided not to grant the petition of the Twin Cities Railway and Telephone Co." In another place the article said, "if read between the lines ever so cursorily (it) throws a perfect glare of light upon the dark and devious ways and crooked methods pursued in such matters where unscrupulous politicians are induced by the most questionable means to make private and monopolistic interests paramount over all considerations of right principles or the public welfare." Further on, too, the article in question said: "The Attorney-General having, while this bill was before the Private Bills Committee, violated the usages of the House and completely overstepped his bounds." Also it was said, "By the interference of the Attorney General, it is said the bill was sent back to the Star Chamber of the Private Bills Committee for mock trial and private strangulation," and again "there is a very fair prospect of having the whole subject taken out of the realm of darkness and jugglery." Mr. Martin also read the complimentary remarks made by the editor about Mr. Speaker, and said he was sure the House would bear him out in the statement that the Speaker had not sent the bill back for reconsideration, but the House had sent the report back for amendment, not because an improper opinion had been expressed in connection with it, but because of an error in wording the report so that the bill was not reported. Speaking particularly of the Columbian's article he (Mr. Martin) declared it to be a tissue of falsehoods from beginning to end, and from the very nature of the serious charges made therein was calculated to heap great discredit on the Private Bills committee, and send abroad to all the world the impression that the members of the Legislature of the Province of British Columbia were a set of scoundrels who had their price and could be bought, and, as a matter of fact, were bought. He referred also to another scandalous attack made on him (Mr. Martin) just after the close of last session, in the Columbian, wherein he and the other representatives in the Legislature, from Yale district, were referred to as representing a lot of half-breeds and Indianized white men. Such language, applied to the people of Yale district, was most contemptible and unworthy, and it was time the House took the matter up and dealt with a firm hand with the abusers of the liberties and privileges of Parliament. (Applause.)

MR. EBERTS followed, speaking warmly of what he characterized as a gross and cowardly attack upon the Private Bills committee. He said he hoped the House would take some immediate action to see that members were protected against such wanton insults.

MR KEITH said that it was with great regret that he addressed the House on this question, but, as a member of the Private Bills Committee, he considered it was his duty to enter his protest against the article in question. He thought that this was a most gratuitous insult to the committee. It was unfair, unjust and cowardly to write such an article, and he for one thought that steps should be taken to protect the members of the House in the transaction of their business as members of any committee, and this paper leaves the inference, that the committee was venial, and that they were bought to bring in their report as they did. But, he said, no matter how he might differ from the majority of the committee he could not see his way to permit such a charge to remain unchallenged, and he, for one, could see no justification at all in the utterly uncalled for attack that was made. He thought that the House should at once take steps to prevent a recurrence of such a thing. He was very sorry it had happened, for, if such a state of affairs was permitted to go on, no one could say that any member would be free from such attacks, when he happened to disagree with a newspaper. He trusted that the members of the House would sink all political differences and arise as one man and put a stop to such disgraceful attacks on its members. (Applause.)

COL. BAKER thought that the House as a whole could not be too careful of its honor, as well also as of the honor of the individual members He declared it was high time some decisive action was taken which would prevent a recurrence of such an attack.

DR. MILNE characterized the Columbian article as one of the most impudent and insulting he had ever seen, not only to individual members of the Private Bills committee, but to the committee as a whole and to the Legislature itself. As a member of the Private Bills committee he emphasized the fact that the committee, in not proving the preamble of the Twin Cities Railway and Telephone Companies' Bill, had done what was simply an act of justice, and in the interests of the public. The attack was unfair and unjust, and he for one would do all in his power to punish the offender unless an ample and complete retraction was made.

MR. BOOTH expressed the opinion that some action should be taken that would put a stop at once and for good to such baseless and unjustifiable attacks on public men acting in their capacity as legislators and transacting public business.

MR. BROWN defended the editor of the Columbian, who, he said, had certainly no such meaning in his article as that the majority of the committee were bribed and influenced in this corrupt way in the action they had taken in regard to the Twin Cities Railway bill. The article he complained of was, he said, simply a reflex of popular opinion which, in this particular case, was very strong.

MR. HUNTER hoped the Attorney-General would find some summary means of bringing the offender before the House to answer for the scandalous criticism of the actions of a committee. After the remarks of the hon. member for Westminster City he (Mr. Hunter) would not be surprised to see him (Mr. Brown) condoning and even approving of any dishonorable act that would tend to throw discredit on the Legislature and its members. The article was one of the grossest and most disgusting libels ever perpetrated on any one, but it seemed that the hon. member for Westminster did not seem to consider this fact at all so long as he could get a dig at the Government. The charge was practically made that the Private Bills committee was under the direct control and influence of the Government. What else could it mean, and what else would the expression "crooked methods" and the like mean, if not that each member of that committee was open to receive the rich red gold, and could be open'y bribed? (Applause.)

MR. SEMLIN did not think the article was at all well advised; but he thought too much was being made of it. Equally hard articles had been written in the province in different newspapers before, and equally hard articles were to-day seen in many of the newspapers of Canada. He advised the members of the Private Bills committee to be above fear and above reproach, and no harm would come of such attacks upon them as this. There was such a thing as going to the other extreme now, and making a martyr of the editor who had offended.

HON. MR. ROBSON said there could be no two opinions as to the fact that a gross breach of privilege had been committed. It was the pride of this House that it was prepared, when a matter of this kind came up, to cast aside party lines and political differences, and all the members were prepared to stand shoulder to shoulder against any person, it made no difference who it was, who should be guilty of such a gross outrage as had just been reported to the House. The hon. member for Yale (Mr. Semlin) had tried to point out a supposed danger ahead of the House, in that, by prosecuting, they (the House) might be lionizing the transgressors. But he (Mr. Robson) did not see that difficulty. Hon. members of the House must never, under any circumstances, be afraid to do their duty for fear of what the consequences might be. If honorable and high-minded men were expected to take their place on the floor of the Legislature as members of the House, they must be protected from such indecent insults. He would like to know what would have occurred had a similar article been written about a court of law, or about judges on the bench? The offender, he declared, would be brought up with a sharp turn for contempt of court, and would be most severely punished, and it was just as much the duty of this House to protect its members who sat on committees constituting the highest courts of the province. If the House was not prepared to deal most summarily with cases of this kind, the direct result would be that the press would teem with just such malignant attacks; and the charges being oft repeated, even by unreliable newspapers, a certain section of the people who did not care sufficiently to sift the matter to the bottom and so find out the full facts of the case, would at last come to the conclusion "This must be true." The House would be indeed most derelict in its duty if it overlooked such unjustifiable breaches of privilege. In order to bring the matter to an issue and have the dignity and honor of the House preserved he moved, seconded by the Hon. the Attorney-General, the following resolution: "That the attention of this House having been directed to a leading article appearing in the Daily Columbian newspaper, published at New Westminster, on Thursday, March 17, 1892, entitled "outrageous presumption"—resolved that in the opinion of this House, the said leading article is a scandalous libel against certain members of this House, and is a high contempt of the privileges and of the constitutional authority of this House; and it appearing that the said Daily Columbian newspaper is published by James M. Kennedy and Robert Kennedy, both resident at the City of New Westminster; be it further resolved, that the said James M. Kennedy and Robert Kennedy be summoned to appear at the bar of the House on Tuesday next, the 29th day of March inst., at the hour of 2 o'clock p. m., to answer for the said scandalous libel and the contempt aforesaid."

HON. MR. ROBSON continued, that in moving this resolution, he felt he was discharging a most unpleasant duty; but, as he had said before on a previous occasion, so long as he occupied the position he did, he proposed to see that the honor of every member of the House was protected. As an old newspaper man himself, he had a fellow-feeling with every member of the press; but neither he nor any other member of the House could have any sympathy with attacks of this kind. To let such things go by without notice, would simply be to encourage them and, perhaps, the very papers that were let off easily for offences of this character, would make even more unjustifiable and uncalled-for attacks. (Applause).

HON. MR. DAVIE expressed the dual feelings of pleasure and pain that he felt at what had been said during the debate on this matter. He was more than pleased to see the hon. member for Nanaimo (Mr. Keith) rise in his place and make a statement of the sense of wrong he (Mr. Keith) experienced at an injustice done, even though that injustice was aimed at the head of a political adversary. He (Mr. Davie) had warm feelings of gratitude for this, and could not refrain from again congratulating the hon. member for Nanaimo on the noble stand he had taken (applause). But in contradistinction to this feeling of pleasure, he was pained at the miserable attempt at palliation of the wrong done by the hon. member for New Westminster city (Mr. Brown) and when he heard him (Mr. Brown) praising and endeavoring to shew justification for the attack, he thought it strange indeed. He need say little more. The man who would perpetrate such a libel as the one which had been brought to the attention of the House to-day was worse than a coward—he was a thief, and if he had stolen a purse he would be deemed worthy of a place only in the penitentiary; but, as it was in this case, instead of stealing actual property, the thief had attempted to steal away that which could never be recovered, viz.: character. He was truly ashamed at the pitiable defence offered for the offender by the hon. member for Westminster (Mr. Brown), and the junior member for Yale (Mr. Semlin). Much better would it be for them to advocate that every man in the penitentiaries should be turned loose than that the offenders against the honor and integrity and character of their fellow-men should be allowed to escape punishment.

MR. KITCHEN was sorry the Premier had seen fit to adopt the course he had. He thought a select committee should be appointed to make an enquiry into the circumstances of the case, the same as had been done in the Barnard-Kellie case.

HON. MR. POOLEY expressed the deep regret he felt at having to address the House upon a matter of this kind. He had already had to do so once before this session, on an occasion which had been referred to by one of the hon. members opposite. On that occasion it was thought advisable to refer the matter to a select committee of the House, that the whole facts of the case could be gone into, and a correct report be made to the House. It was thought necessary to adopt this course as the complaint made was of a personal dispute which had occurred within the precincts of the House. The two cases were, however, quite dissimilar. In the first place the words complained of were spoken in the heat of passion, and, beyond the injury to the personal feelings of an hon. member of this House, did no damage to his character or reputation. The present case was a different one. Here the words were written in cool, calm and deliberate language. They could not be changed. The House had the whole matter in dispute immediately before it, and, having the case in this shape, there was no necessity for appointing a select committee. The attack was made on some hon. members of the House, and it impugned most distinctly their honor and integrity. During his (Mr. Pooley's) long term of service in the House, some eleven years now, he had never seen any member of the House or any body of members attacked in this most outrageous way. If this kind of thing were allowed to occur, without the House taking cognizance of it, there would be no knowing where it would stop. No one, he said, would stand up for the press and the liberty of the press more manfully than he would; but he would still be the first one to put his foot firmly down and put a stop to license which was not liberty (applause). What comes before the House, he said, and what we see and read here for ourselves, is a matter of small moment compared with the greater question at issue. Members know what the truth is, and can for themselves choose the true from the false. But newspapers go abroad—the Westminster paper complained of had probably a wide circulation—and people who do not know much of our province and of our people would say, "What a dishonest lot of fellows they have out there in the British Columbia Legislature!" That was exactly the deduction the public would draw from reading an article like the one now complained of. When such articles were written reflecting on the character—public or personal—of members of the House, it was the duty of members of the House to come forward as one man and defend their honor. He had been sorry to hear the hon. junior member for Yale palliate the offence, but, along with the Attorney-General, could not but congratulate the hon. member for Nanaimo (Mr. Keith) on his manly stand on this question. He presumed the hon. member for Yale (Mr. Semlin) was content to take the flattery he had received in the libellous article and was willing to have it go forth to the world, that he (Mr. Semlin) was a paragon of virtue amongst a crowd of dishonest men. In conclusion, he said, if British Columbia was going to have a respectable legislature, it was time a firm hand was put on these publishers of scandalous articles. He had much pleasure in supporting the resolution. (Applause.)

MR. SEMLIN claimed that he had been misunderstood. He had not endeavored to minimize the offence; but thought the Premier was taking what was decidedly a wrong course.

MR. KEITH again addressed the House His opinion was that in cases of this kind decisive steps must be taken to punish the publishers of such atrocious scandals. The members had to look out for the future and, unless a stop were put to such abuse right away, no one could tell when even greater attacks might be made.

MR. MARTIN read from the Columbian, of April 22nd, 1891, wherein he and his fellow-members from Yale were stigmatized as the representatives of Indianized whitemen, half-breeds, etc. This language he resented most strongly, and would have no hesitation in stating that a paper which would make such scandalous charges, had no right to expect any mercy at the hands of this House. For, this reason he was going to support the resolution. The man who wrote that letter in the Columbian, last year, and the writer of the present article complained of, were doubtless one and the same man, and he would not be at all surprised if he (the writer) was in Victoria.

HON. MR. BEAVEN claimed that the procedure proposed by the Premier was irregular.

MR. SPEAKER ruled that the motion was regular and was properly before the House.

MR. COTTON thought the House would regret hasty action. He would not palliate the offence, but would say that his extensive experience as a newspaper writer had taught him the difficulty of keeping within the bounds of propriety, more especially when discussing political matters. He referred to an editorial article in last Sunday's COLONIST, in which he said he was very wrongfully called a liar and a sneak. He had, however, not thought it necessary to defend his own good name, else, since he had been in the House, he would have had about three editors summoned before the bar at least fourteen times. He again referred to the COLONIST editorial, which was in connection with the telegram sent by the Premier to Vancouver, last week, to the President of the St. Patrick's society. The News-Advertiser had said in the report of the proceedings that the Premier's telegram, expressing his (Mr. Robson's) sympathy with the Irishmen of the province was regarded as the joke of the evening. Meeting Mr. Robson on Saturday morning last, he (Mr. Cotton) had been taken to task for having made an underhand attack on the Premier in connection with the matter above referred to. He had promised the Premier that he would enquire into the circumstances, and had done so, for he would not allow any man on the staff of his newspaper to take advantage through the news columns of any other man. The place for any comment or political criticism was in the editorial columns—not in the news columns. Well, he had made it his especial business to enquire into the circumstances of the case to see how it was that the News-Advertiser had said what it did, and he found out that the reporter was correct after all. The President of the St. Patrick's Society, Mr. J. M. O'Brien, editor of the Vancouver World, had, it seemed, not read the Premier's telegram at all, but had read a totally different one, no doubt made up by himself. He (Mr. Cotton) wished, now that this case was before the House, to draw the Speaker's attention to the perpetual nuisance of having strangers in, around, and all over the House, lobbying for private bills, etc. He moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion put, and defeated on a division.

After remarks by Mr. Brown, Mr. Booth, and Hon. Mr. Beaven,

MR. SWORD moved that the matter now before the House be referred to a Select committee, to investigate and report upon.

The amendment was lost on the following division:—

YEAS—Messrs. Semlin, McKenzie, Sword, Kitchen, Cotton, Beaven and Brown—7.

NAYS—Messrs. Grant, Punch, Horne, Smith, Keith, Baker, Robson, Davie, Vernon, Eberts, Stoddart, Booth, Hall, Nason, Pooley, Turner, Martin, Croft, Hunter, Rogers, Anderson and Fletcher—22.

The original motion was carried on the following division:—

YEAS—Messrs. Grant, Punch, Horne, Smith, Keith, Baker, Robson, Davie, Vernon, Eberts, Stoddart, Booth, Hall, Nason, Pooley, Turner, Martin, Croft, Hunter, Rogers, Anderson and Fletcher—22.

NAYS—Messrs. Semlin, McKenzie, Sword, Kitchen, Cotton and Brown—6.

The House rose at 6 o'clock.

EVENING SESSION.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 8 o'clock.

COLUMBIA & KOOTENAY RAILWAY.

On motion of Col. Baker the Columbia & Kootenay Railway Bill was read a second time. To be committed to-morrow.

VICTORIA CITY ENABLING BILL.

DR. MILNE moved the second reading of the Victoria City Enabling Bill. Read a second time, to be committed to-morrow.

MUNICIPAL BILLS.

The House went into committee of the whole on the Municipal Bills, No. 21 and 27, Mr. McKenzie in the chair.

The first discussion of more than minor importance arose over clause 24 (Hon. Mr. Davie's bill), which reads as follows:—

"Every Police Magistrate shall be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor, and shall hold office during pleasure; and any such appointment may be cancelled by order of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. The Lieutenant-Governor shall, by an Order in Council, fix and may from time to time vary the salary to be paid to such Magistrate, and the said salary shall be paid by the city or town."

HON. MR. DAVIE claimed in support of his amendment that it was a fundamental principle of morality that no man should be placed in a position where his duty and his interests would conflict.

HON. MR. BEAVEN spoke of the clause as a retrograde move. There was not a single instance, he said, where it could be shown that a police magistrate in the province had not done his duty well. He further objected to the process of centralization which the Attorney-General was gradually developing.

After considerable discussion, the committee rose, reported progress and asked leave to sit again.

The House adjourned at 11:35 p.m.

THE BEHRING SEA QUESTION.

TO THE EDITOR:—Does it violate the constitutional rights of American citizens and the vested rights of Great Britain? Behring's Sea is bounded on the north by Behring's Straits and Alaska; Asia on the east, Alaska on the west, and the broad Pacific on the south. It contains many islands, where the fur seal, the most valuable product of these waters, seek a place of refuge to give birth to their offspring. Subsequently to the Alaska purchase, the eye of a rich company was cast to these northern waters and coveted the soft rich robes of these innocent creatures. In 1868 this company, under the name of the "Alaska Commercial Co.," purchased from a United States Congress, composed of a large majority of Republican members, the exclusive right to capture the seal that abounded at the time of breeding on these islands, ostensibly for the protection of the fur bearing animals, whose young they destroyed by thousands. The lease of the said company has since expired, and another company of immense capital, styled "The North West Trading Co," with some contingent restrictions, monopolize these waters.

Notwithstanding these royal grants of an assumed power, loyal Americans and British Maritime men claim that "all men were created equal," and have "inalienable rights" on the high seas that were created by the Almighty as a vested right to man—subject to the three-mile restriction common to the law of nations—and have persisted in entering the Behring Sea, claiming the products of the waters as a natural heritage. "The North West Trading Co," covetous of the wealth contained in these waters, have applied to the United States Government for protection to rights which they had no constitutional power to grant, and the Government has, consequently, proclaimed that the Seas and Great Waters are closed to the rights of nations. In article 4th, sec. 111 of the Constitution of the United States, we find the following: "The Congress of the United States will make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory and other property belonging to the United States, and nothing in their constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice the claims of the United States, or of any State." The President and every member of Congress, before entering the duties of office, is sworn to support the constitution—this article being one of the most prominent features, as the one on which the Republican and Democratic parties took issue in the campaign of 1860 with the direful result that followed.

Now, we claim that monopoly to this sea and these islands dotting her turbulent waters are prejudicing the claims of the United States and the different States, in a maritime point of view, and being a scion of Revolutionary fathers, neither advocate despotism nor anarchy, and let the present conglomeration that hold the wielding power of foreign proclivities wreck the universe. We hold as most sacred the prestige of our ancestors. Great Britain asks no favors and will submit to no wrongs. She has rights on the great waters, where her noble vessels command respect, and has always, and on every occasion, given protection to those who honor themselves by flying her flag as an emblem at the pinnacle of power. Knowing this to be the case, Americans leave the country that once was the pride of their boyhood—being denied the constitutional right to float their vessels in American waters—change their flag, and become British subjects, and most of the vessels seized are owned by Americans. It is stated that Russia claimed a closed sea, as a precedent. Have we become so lost to our national honor as a Republic that we must look to the most despotic power on earth for a precedent? Is it not enough to be ostracised by the machinations of foreign extraction in all our political positions, without the examples of despots, or the chaos of confusion, by resorting to anarchy, with a paltry excuse to preserve the harmless seals and enrich the non-English-speaking foreigners?

PAUL K. HOBBS.

THE END OF THEIR YEAR.

Annual Meeting of the Natural History Society and Election of Officers.

The working year of the B.C. Natural History Society terminated last evening, when the annual meeting was held at the Provincial Museum Officers were elected, and an interesting programme for the coming summer months was roughly blocked out.

As in the past, field meetings will be held as long as the weather permits, and as frequently as possible; while, during the winter, frequent indoor gatherings will listen to papers on subjects of interest to all lovers of natural history. The secretary of the association, Dr. Newcombe, is now returning from a European trip, and writes that he has made arrangements with the principal museums and the leading scientists of the Old World for an exchange of specimens; full particulars of an interesting tour will be obtainable upon his return.

The election of officers for the ensuing year resulted in the choosing of the following gentlemen, each of whom is an enthusiastic worker in the world of natural science: Ashdowne Green, president; Dr. E. C. B. Hanington and O. C. Hastings, vice-presidents; Dr. Newcome, secretary; C. Lowenberg, treasurer; Dr. Hasell, librarian; J. Fannin, curator; Messrs. Maynard, Hanington and McTavish, committee.

A Millionaire's Daughter Elopes.

SAN FRANCISCO, March 21.—Anita Baldwin, the 17-year-old daughter of Mr. E. J. Baldwin, the millionaire, eloped, to-day, with Mr. G. W. Baldwin, her second cousin, aged 25. They were married outside the heads on board a tug.

It is stated that Mr. Baldwin will disinherit his daughter.

NEWS OF THE PROVINCE.

Drowned in the Narrows—Opening of Navigation on the Columbia.

Finding a Long Lost Body—New Seed for the Okanagan Farmers.

VANCOUVER.

VANCOUVER, March 21.—The double scull boat race between Welch and Courly and Welch and Hillier, on the Inlet, this afternoon, was won by the former crew. The stakes were $50 a side.

WESTMINSTER.

NEW WESTMINSTER, March 21.—The Y.M.C.A. celebrated its fifth anniversary, yesterday, by special services.

The salmon catch was very light again, last night. A few boxes of salmon trout have been sent down from the Mission, but even they are not plentiful. Mr. Samuel Wilmot, accompanied by Inspector McNab, left for the Harrison River, to-day, to select a site for the new Salmon Hatchery. He leaves for Ottawa, this week.

Father Ouillette, pastor of St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, at mass on Sunday charged his congregation with being slothful and lazy. He is reported to have said that only one-half of his congregation attended mass on Sundays. The dispensation from fasting during Lent had made them more unpious.

Kannard Ross assaulted J. H. Lalonde at Bilodeau's hotel, on Saturday night. Ross had an old grudge against Lalonde. The assailant was fined $20 in the Police Court, this morning.

NANAIMO.

NANAIMO, March 21.—Three white men attempted to rob a Chinese store at Northfield, last night, at about half-past nine o'clock. One Chinaman was seriously hurt, being struck on the head by the would-be robber with a stone. Three Belgians were arrested. The hearing comes up on Wednesday.

At the Wellington mines, every shaft is in full working.

A large $5,000 hotel is being put up by the proprietor of the Quarter-Way house.

Steamship Empire will sail from San Francisco for Nanaimo, to-morrow. No damage resulted to the freight through her recent accident.

Several new buildings are being erected at Northfield, which is rapidly improving. Mr. S. M. Robins has instructed a gang of men to make a road to St. Luke's and the Presbyterian churches, and has given a handsome donation to the organ fund of St. Luke's. A bell will be hung in the steeple by Easter time. It is intended to have a concert in aid of St. Luke's in Easter week.

VANCOUVER.

VANCOUVER, March 22.—Lawyer Davis, counsel for the defence in the Northwest Herchmer case, has located here.

J. K. McDonald, general manager of the Confederation Life, is expected in Vancouver, to-morrow.

James Chaplin, of the extensive Eastern manufacturing firm of Chaplin & Co., is in the city. Chaplin had extensive land interests here.

A sailor, named McGee, a native of Douglas, Isle of Man, was drowned in the Narrows, off the Empress of India, this morning. He leaves a wife and one child. He was assisting in getting the passengers' landing way ready when he fell overboard. Life preservers were thrown him, but after making several frantic struggles to reach the nearest one, he sank and did not again appear.

A rare fish, known as the sea cucumber "Holothuria frondoso," was captured near Hayden & Walker's boat house, this afternoon. It is two feet in length, with well-developed fronds.

In the double scull race, reported yesterday between R. A. Welsh and R. A. Coutley and Ed. Welsh and Joseph Hillier, the contest was not for $50, but was a friendly competition for a small trophy.

WESTMINSTER.

NEW WESTMINSTER, March 22.—The Westminster Cricket Club have been granted the use of a portion of Moody Square for this season, by the City Council. Operations will be commenced in a week or two.

New Westminster Lodge No. 3, I.O.O.F., Celebrated their 21st anniversary, to-night, in the Opera House. All the Vancouver Lodges were represented by delegations, and almost every Oddfellow in the city was present. Gold medals were presented to the pioneer members of the lodge.

At the meeting of the South Westminster Coal company, this afternoon, the tender of Sergeant Godfrey to sink a 5x7 feet shaft, sixty feet deep, at South Westminster, was accepted, and orders were given to proceed at once with the work. Sergeant Godfrey was busy, to-day, getting the tools and men together to commence operations, and at 7 o'clock to-morrow morning, the first shovelful of earth, of what may prove to be one of the most important enterprises ever undertaken in this vicinity, will be turned Sergeant Godfrey is confident that he will strike coal before sinking far, and his confidence is shared by many who are interested in the enterprise.

A meat famine is threatened owing to the non-arrival of up-country cattle, on account of the strike on the C.P.R.

The Supreme Court of Canada will sit on April 4th, for the purpose of delivering judgment in the appeal of Brighouse versus the City.

The salmon catch is getting slightly better, the boats averaging from three to ten fish each.

There is very little shipping at present, but, by the end of this week, things are expected to liven up.

KAMLOOPS.

The Board of Directors of the Royal Inland Hospital, Kamloops, have re-elected Mr. James McIntosh as president, and Mr. J. Ogden-Grahame as treasurer, and Mr. E. H. Jones as secretary.

St. Patrick's Day was celebrated in Kamloops by a grand ball under the auspices of the ladies of the town.

The Inland Sentinel says that the people are unanimously in favor of the present ferry crossing as the location for the bridge to cross the Thompson.

Several ranchers who wintered stock for the market have been unable to dispose of them, and had to turn them out on the ranges again. The coast city butchers had arranged for a supply elsewhere.

NANAIMO.

NANAIMO, March 22.—About the middle of February, the steward of the barque Oregon was missing, and at the time it was supposed he had fallen over while going on board the vessel at night. No trace, however, of him was found. This morning a dead body was picked up on the beach near the V. C. Co.'s wharves, which was afterwards identified as that of John Doyle, the missing man. An inquest will be held tomorrow.

The Northfield Association Football Team will play against Westminster next Saturday, for the cup tie. The winning team will then have to contest with the Rangers for the cup.

The local butchers do not seem to think that the enforcement of the 90 days quarantine on American cattle coming into the province, will affect them much, nor put up the price of beef to any appreciable extent.

Mr. Alex. Mayer,—treasurer of the Masonic lodge of this city for over a quarter of a century, was presented with a handsome gold watch, last evening, prior to his departure for the South.

Mr. George Haldnell was appointed secretary of the N.E.P. Society, last evening, vice R. Pollock, resigned.

Arrived, ship Babcock; ss. Wellington.

PLUMPER'S PASS.

St. Patrick's day was observed here by the majority of the settlers, and though the absence of the little trefoil was rather conspicuous a good substitute was found in green ribbons and clover, the display of which showed the marked appreciation, esteem, affection and honor, to the memory of the Patron Saint of the Emerald Isle.

The second dance in connection with the Young Men's Institute here, was held in Robson's Hall, on Friday evening last, and though the inclemency of the weather prevented quite a few from attending, everything passed off in first-class style.

The steamer Quadra arrived here on Saturday afternoon, and landed pickets and lumber for a new fence around the land belonging to the lighthouse.

Mrs. Sears, of Victoria, is here, and will be a visitor at this place throughout the summer.

Mr. J. Wessel, of Saturna Island, arrived here in his sloop, the Fleetwing, on Thursday last, and returned with a load of hay. He reports things looking favorable in that section, especially the sheep and cattle, which are doing well on the range. Ploughing is all finished, and in his opinion the prospects of early crops are everything that could be desired.

Mr. W. Cain arrived here on Friday last from New Westminster, and brought with him 3,000 feet of lumber to build a house on his ranch, situated on Galiano Island.

The visitors staying at Mayne Island hotel for the past week were: G. R. Long, Pender Island; John Wessel and Leonard S. Higgs, Saturna Island; Sergeant T. Redding and Miss K. Gabriel, Victoria.

GOLDEN.

The new steamboat of the Upper Columbia Navigation & Tramway Co. was launched on Monday.

Walter Dainard has returned from camp at Crystal Creek, and reports good progress and a vein of good concentrating ore about four feet wide.

The Syenite Bluff tunnel is now in about 140 feet; to complete the contract only 60 feet more have to be driven.

But little is definitely known as to when navigation on either the Columbia or Kootenay Rivers will be resumed. The Columbia River is between four and five feet lower than when the Lytton stopped running last fall, and is still falling.

REVELSTOKE.

George Laforme arrived in town on Thursday from St. Jean, Manitoba, where he has been stopping all winter. He has an idea of going down to the Slocan with his pack train.

Messrs. W. R. Chestney and J. R. Nigh, of Victoria, who have been building a scow, started early on Monday morning down the river for Nelson.

Edward Adair arrived on Thursday from his ranch near the entrance of the Columbia into the Arrow Lake. He reports the river clear of ice, and the snow around his section has almost disappeared; his cattle having been feeding out for the last two weeks.

It is said that there are 15,000 persons at Spokane waiting to cross over to the Kootenay mines when navigation opens.

The Revelstoke Snow Shoe and Toboggan club celebrated St. Patrick's Day by holding a calico ball.

OKANAGAN MISSION.

A Chinaman from Osooyos was married at Penticton, on Saturday, to a dusky beauty of the Indian reserve, named Madelaine.

G. G. Mackay and E. Smith went down to the Mission, on Saturday, accompanied by C. C. Pridham, an Englishman, who intends engaging in fruit culture.

Messrs. Postill Bros., at the Mission, had seven lambs on March 7th.

The Government will appoint a constable for the Mission valley without delay.

The Government has stood half the expenses of the rewards offered at the Knox trial—$500 in all.

VERNON.

Mr. Sivewright expects to open the new Coldstream school on April 4th.

The Oddfellows lodge expects to open next week. Their hall is most comfortably and luxuriously fitted up.

The seed (Red Fife wheat) brought in by the manager of the Enderby mill has been distributed among the farmers in Okanagan and Spallumcheen.

Messrs. Okell & Morris, of the Victoria Preserve factory, will visit this section, this summer, to secure fruit for canning purposes.

Messrs. Wulffsohn & Bewicke, bankers, of Vancouver, are about to open a general banking and real estate office on Barnard avenue.

The directors of the Okanagan Land and Development Co., at the instance of Mr. Price Ellison, have decided to grant an entire block (2½ acres) as a site for the proposed local hospital.

Messrs. Ellis & Shorts have sold the ss. Penticton to Lequime Bros., of the Mission, the purchase consideration being in excess of $5,000.

WINNIPEG WIRINGS.

Temperance Candidate in Emerson—Skipped—Archbishop Tache and the Poet Whittier.

WINNIPEG, March 21.—J. W. Whitman, of Emerson, is a probable candidate for that district, in the Legislature. The temperance people are endeavoring to induce him to run as their candidate.

Paul Blondin, a hard character, has skipped to the States with a member of the demi-monde, leaving his wife and family at the railway station, destitute. They had arranged to go South with Blondin, but the latter took another woman.

John J. Whittier, the renowned Puritan poet of the U. S., has addressed a letter to the Archbishop of St. Boniface, thanking him for the ringing of the bells of St. Boniface on his recent anniversary, in pleasant recognition of his poem, "The Red River Voyageur."