

A QUESTION OF COURTESY.

It may be held that in reference to the protection of the Columbia River at Revelstoke the attitude of the province was not one of friendliness; and while on that subject I may as well deal with the criticisms of the Opposition. It is stated that the government in this matter at first denied its responsibility in the premises, then admitted it, and again repudiated it. This is not the case. The government does not now and never did admit that that work is one which it should undertake, and although it HAS undertaken it as a MATTER OF LOCAL NECESSITY, I can assure you that this is not the last of it—that sooner or later, whatever party is in power at Ottawa, the broad question of the responsibility of the Dominion government in regard to the damage done by the action of navigable waters will have to be taken up and definitely settled, and then the Province will demand consideration and compensation for this work.

Revelstoke Protection Reviewed.

I do not intend to go over the whole subject again. The correspondence was laid before parliament and has been published, but so far from there being any discourtesy on our part or disposition to unfriendliness it was entirely the other way. The Dominion government placed the sum of \$10,900 in their 1896 estimates contingent upon the province voting a like sum. Whether the Dominion government was sincere or not in this I do not know, but not a word was said about it until a few days before the session of 1897, and personally I was wholly unaware of such a vote. This government was not consulted about it, and was not notified of it. If there was any discourtesy it was certainly not on our part. When the government was notified it took the position that the duty lay wholly with the Dominion government, the same as the protection of the Fraser river banks. If one was a Dominion matter, so was the other. We considered that to take this up in the way suggested was to assume a far-reaching responsibility, and coming on

us in the beginning of a trying session the government had not time to take it up seriously with the Dominion government. On this point I may say that no man in the House has talked so strongly on the treatment of this Province by the Dominion as the late member for Kootenay, Mr. Kellie, who in all things except the Columbia river at Revelstoke, made it one of his main political planks. In respect to that matter, because it affected his own support, he was willing to take the onus off the Dominion, and with that consistency for which his political career is noted is as strongly denouncing the Provincial government, because it refused to accept his view of the situation.

The Government's Position Explained.

Now, then, as to our position in this matter. The vote was not put on for that purpose in 1897. It may have been a mistake, or it may not, in view of the action the government subsequently took, but it was a matter considered not to be within our rights. However, in going up to Revelstoke last summer, I was strongly urged to take the matter up, and seeing for myself the loss to property that was likely to ensue, I wired and wrote to Ottawa urging the necessity of protection and offering as a matter of urgency to co-operate. The reply was "No vote," and I was reminded of our refusal to co-operate. I wrote and urged again, but without avail. I then sent up our own engineer to report for the purpose of getting an estimate. After receiving the report I wrote again in order that the Minister of Public Works might provide a sum in the estimate of the current year. Our representations were made in the most courteous manner, and with but one desire, and that to help the people of Revelstoke. Hon. Mr. Tarte, in a moment of spleen—and I absolve his colleagues from all blame,—wrote as discourteous and undignified a letter as was possible for one minister of the Crown to address to another, and in order to justify himself, testily represented it as a protest against this government throwing the responsibility of non-

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