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"RASCALLY CAMPAIGN TACTICS."

The spectre of that forged telegram, like the ghost in the old play, "will not down." We confess we have been trying to get away from it ourselves; but in whatever direction we turn the ghastly thing confronts us. The perpetrators of the evil deed which begat the all-pervading apparition doubtless thought an appeal to the church would be an effective means of relief from further terrifying experiences, but they made a mistake. The malignant spirit refuses to be exorcised by priestly ministration. The newspapers of Great Britain have taken the subject up, as usual exhibiting considerable haziness of mind in regard to the geography of America and misconception regarding the author of the criminal offence. It is now generally admitted to have been a criminal offence, which the constituted authorities ought to take cognizance of and endeavor to trace to the offender. For the benefit of the editors of London, Eng., we may state that the forgery was not committed in Columbia, which might be confounded with a state in South America, but in British Columbia, a province of Canada; that the forger was not "a colonist," who might be taken to be a settler, but some one connected with, or having relations with, the Colonist, a newspaper published in the city of Victoria, the capital of the aforesaid province of British Columbia.

Another reason why the ghost of that crime of forgery will not down is that it appears to have become a matter of political controversy in Eastern Canada. The Conservative press accuses Sir Wilfrid Laurier of an offence, the exact nature of which is not disclosed in its comments, in bringing the matter up in the House of Commons at all, since it is claimed Mr. Borden had already made an explanation to Mr. Templeman which relieved him (the leader of the opposition) of any opprobrium that might be attached to the forgery. This is virtually a claim that the matter ought to have been hushed up and nothing made public about it, on the plea that the leader of a "great party on which a slur had been cast" had apologized and disavowed responsibility. Such is the view of the Toronto News, the leading Conservative newspaper of Ontario; but it hardly harmonizes with the fact that Mr. Borden did not make a complete or satisfactory explanation until forced to make a full revelation in the House of Commons or with the concluding portion of the News's article, which reiterates its demand for an investigation and the exposure and punishment of the offender in the following language:

"The mutilation of Mr. Borden's telegram was 'an ugly transaction' amounting to 'deliberate forgery' and that the culprits ought to be exposed. It is not easy to see what more this journal could have said in disapproval of the mishandling of Mr. Borden's dispatch at Victoria. Moreover, we do not believe that Mr. Borden's telegram was mutilated by accident and that it was through some mysterious series of unfortunate incidents that the dispatch in its mutilated form appeared in the Victoria Colonist. It seems plain that those at Victoria who received Mr. Borden's dispatch felt that it ought to be made stronger, that as written it would not satisfy the extreme opponents of Japanese immigration on the coast and that they therefore deliberately determined to forge something more likely to affect a few wavering electors. This, as the News has said, was an ugly transaction and we venture to think that some special effort should be made to lay the whole story of the transaction before the public. All such rascally campaign tactics ultimately damage the party in whose interests they are employed and it is Mr. Borden, rather than Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who has most cause to denounce those through whom his position on a public question was deliberately misrepresented."

OPPORTUNE REDUCTIONS IN HABERDASHERY

FOR THE GOVERNMENT HOUSE BALL

The next important social function will be the Government House Ball. In order to introduce our well known line of men's wearables to those who have heretofore not dealt with us, we offer the three following price inducements:

FULL DRESS SHIRTS, regular $2.00 and $2.50, for $1.75

WHITE KID GLOVES, regular 75c, for 50c

FANCY SILK AND LISLE HOSE, regular 75c and $1.00, for 50c

Ladies' White Reynier 8, 12 or 16-button Kid Gloves at 25 per cent. reduction.

We Fit and Guarantee Fowne's Kid Gloves.

We Fit and Guarantee Dent's Kid Gloves.

FINCH & FINCH

HATTERS

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A HEAVY TASK.

Great interest attaches to the session of the Imperial Parliament which was opened by His Majesty the King this morning. There is a well-defined impression that the meeting may be the final one of the present Parliament. Ministers have dropped hints which may be interpreted as indicating the intention of the government to lock horns with the House of Lords in a final effort to fix the status of the hereditary chamber in accordance with popular will. But that may be accepted as a matter largely of a speculative character. The real interest of the public in the session will be directed to the budget speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Lloyd George will be compelled to grapple with one of the greatest problems of the time. Business is bad. Treasury receipts have suffered a great decline notwithstanding the marked increases in taxation. The inauguration of a system of old age pensions, a measure which has been received with popular approval, and which is admitted to be a permanent feature of policy notwithstanding bitter criticism, has contributed in a marked degree to the fiscal deficit. Taken in connection with the programme of the Admiralty this pension scheme will call for the exercise of some considerable ingenuity on the part of the Chancellor. But Mr. George, being of ardent Celtic temperament, does not appear to be at all depressed because of the magnitude of the task that confronts him. He said at a recent meeting in London:

"No man is disposed to treat the financial embarrassments of the country at the present time less lightly than I am. I fully realize that it is a stupendous undertaking. We have difficulties in common with many other great countries. We do not stand alone, but that does not make our task easier. I have heard it suggested that I regard the coming Budget as a sort of punitive expedition against the tribes which have been molesting the government. Well, now, I should not have thought it necessary for any British minister to disclaim the possession of such a purpose. If a Chancellor of the Exchequer undertook the framing of a Budget in a retributive or vindictive spirit against any class, against any party, against any section, I say here that he would be not merely unworthy of his high office, but he would not be fit to be appointed an exciseman in a country village. Such things are impossible. There is no branch of the public service which demands such ruthless impartiality as the control and direction of the national finance. You should tax no man, you should permit no man to escape taxation, from fear or favor, affection or ill-will. The Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have a single eye, and that ought to be fixed on the national interests. He ought to have a single purpose, and that ought to be the protection and the promotion of those interests. It is in that spirit that I claim to have administered the affairs of the Board of Trade, and it is in that spirit that I approach the greater and more trying task which is now in front of me. Whether I fail or succeed in the task before me, at any rate I shall honestly attempt to do my duty there, and I shall not disgrace the profession to which I belong."

LORD BERESFORD'S RESIGNATION

Lord Charles Beresford, commander of the British Channel Fleet, as a result doubtless of a long-standing dispute with the Admiralty, has resigned his command. His Lordship, who is one of the most popular of officers, will doubtless remain "out of commission" until something turns up which will give him employment under what he considers more congenial conditions. Such conditions may or may not have an intimate connection with a change of government. If such a change did come about no one would be surprised did Lord Charles become First Sea Lord. In any case the late commander of the Channel Fleet is unquestionably a man whom the British nation delights to honor. He is a fine type of the old sea dog, a British sailor who enjoys the absolute confidence of the British people. One incident in his career will be remembered by the public as illustrating his ideas of the manner in which a commander should act under a given set of circumstances. At the time of the Dogger Bank incident, when a number of North Sea fishing vessels were fired upon by the Russian Baltic Sea fleet when on its way to the Sea of Japan under command of the late Admiral Rojestvensky, Lord Charles was in command of the Mediterranean squadron. As Admiral of that fleet he received telegraphic instructions to intercept Rojestvensky's command. Admiral Beresford did not consider his instructions sufficiently definite. Therefore he telegraphed an inquiry to the following effect: "Shall I sink them or bring them back?" Fortunately there was no particular occasion for impetuosity, so the Russians were permitted to proceed. Investigation showed that the outrage was not deliberate, but the result of panic. The Battle of the Sea of Japan settled the bill.

THE BUDGET.

The annual budget speech of Finance Minister Tatlow was the feature of the proceedings in the legislature yesterday. It was a most interesting feature, too, illustrating the really remarkable progress the province of British Columbia is making in every line of industry. The receipts from almost every source of income have shown wonderful buoyancy, considering that the past year has been one of depression throughout almost the entire business world.

Probably the most significant portion of Captain Tatlow's statement was the comparison between the growth of revenue from direct taxation and the increase from taxation upon the natural resources of the province. This condition of affairs is quite gratifying, bearing out as it does the contention of the opposition and of all competent critics that if these resources were utilized to the best advantage there need be no necessity whatever for direct taxation—that a province endowed with such magnificent resources ought to derive quite sufficient revenue from the application of its natural wealth not only to pay its way as it goes, but to rapidly extinguish the provincial debt. No doubt this feature of the budget will receive the attention of opposition critics.

Every resident of British Columbia will share the Finance Minister's optimism in regard to the splendid prospects of British Columbia. The conditions in general bear out the most glowing of the forecasts in respect of the province's future. Not the least gratifying feature of the budget speech is that part of it dealing with the present state and the future prospects of the basic industries, such as agriculture, horticulture, timber, fisheries and mining. Every one of these industries may properly be described as still in a state of infancy. We are yet importing yearly millions upon millions of dollars worth of food, although our total population is not much greater than half that of the leading city of the Dominion. This proves that there is ample room for development, and that the government could undertake no more important task than that of encouraging the settlement of the province with an agricultural population. Unfortunately, hitherto the tendency has been to place barriers in the way of such immigration, notwithstanding glowing statements about the extent of territory suitable for the purposes of the husbandman. Too much of our agricultural land has been permitted to fall into the hands of persons who hold it for speculative purposes at extortionate prices. There is no question that hundreds of immigrants come into the province yearly, only to depart disappointed in their quest of obtaining land under reasonable conditions. Under the circumstances, what can be expected in face of the fact that the great areas of the provinces of the Northwest are held free by the Dominion government for the benefit of immigrants? Until the government undertakes in a determined manner to find a remedy for such abuses it will be vain for Captain Tatlow or any other finance minister to yearly call attention to the splendid prices obtained for butter, eggs, cheese and other products of the farm. The millions of dollars annually sent out of the province for the purchase of these necessaries of life must constitute a drain upon provincial wealth until provision is made by a business government in the real sense of the term for the settlement of the agricultural lands of the province by persons accustomed to agricultural pursuits.

SOME SIDELIGHTS ON BILL MINER'S ESCAPE

Hopes of Pardon If He Would Surrender Stolen C. P. R. Bonds.

(Special to the Times.)

Ottawa, Feb. 17.—Hon. A. B. Aylesworth in the Commons this afternoon, replying to Mr. Meighen, gave details of a number of interviews allowed with "Bill" Miner while in the penitentiary at New Westminster. He referred especially to an interview in the warden's presence when A. E. Bullock, of Vancouver, said to be in the special service of the C. P. R., and Jake Terry talked to Miner. All the interviews were allowed solely on the warden's or deputy warden's authority. The Ottawa authorities were not consulted.

During the investigation conducted by Inspector Dawson after Miner's escape, Police Officer McIntosh, of New Westminster, stated that after an interview with Bullock and Terry, Miner had told him that Bullock said Miner would be pardoned if he would surrender the C. P. R. Australian bonds which the company believed Miner had taken from an express car at the Mission holdup. Bullock explained that the interview was merely to see if Terry and Miner knew each other as they had been in San Quentin penitentiary together. The interview was not entered in the visitors' book at the penitentiary. This was violation of rules.

—The funeral of the late Andrew David took place on Wednesday at 2 o'clock from the undertaking parlors of W. B. Smith, Yates street. There was a large attendance of friends. The funeral services were conducted by Rev. John Grundy. The pallbearers were: J. Neilson, W. Thomson, R. Ranmusson, G. Benson, B. Foster and M. Seneb.

ESTIMATES ARE BEFORE HOUSE

TOTAL VOTE ASKED IS CLOSE ON $7,000,000

Public Works Are Being Given a Generous Share of the Money.

Legislature Press Gallery, Feb. 17.

The estimates for the fiscal year which commences on April 1st next were brought down this afternoon. It is impossible to make any satisfactory comparison of either revenue or expenditure, as the present fiscal year, which began on July 1st last, only contains nine months.

In addition to expenditure for 1909-10 estimated at $5,655,798, there are supplementary estimates of $1,030,638.55 for the current fiscal year and $153,100.46 for 1907-8, or a total amount to be voted of $6,839,537. Taking the main estimates passed last session and the supplementaries brought down today the nine months' expenditure amounts to $4,056,950, or at the rate of about $5,410,000 a year, although that is to some extent a rough-and-ready way of arriving at a comparative figure.

The estimate of the receipts for the coming fiscal year amounts to $5,948,626.66, as compared with an estimated revenue for the nine months of the present fiscal year of $3,143,276.66, and some $31,500 less than the actual revenue for the year 1907-8. Of this $522,076.66 is Dominion government subsidies and grants. Large increases are expected in land and timber receipts—$750,000 from land sales, $135,000 from land revenue, $2,000,000 from timber licenses, $250,000 from timber royalties, $105,000 from mineral tax and $140,000 from other sources connected with mining; $200,000 as the province's share of the Chinese head tax, $200,000 from revenue tax, $275,000 from real property tax, $150,000 from personal property tax, $130,000 from income tax, $200,000 from land taxes, $140,000 coal tax and royalty and $175,000 from registry fees.

The estimated expenditure for the coming year is $5,615,798.11, as compared with $3,002,311.56 for the nine months of the year just closing, to which must be added $40,000 for the payment of interest on Shuswap and Okanagan, Nakusp and Slocan and Victoria and Sidney Railway bonds, or a total estimated expenditure of $5,655,798.11. For these railway subsidies the vote last year was $24,000.

The expenditure by services is estimated as follows:

Service.	Amount.
Public debt	$ 520,824
Civil government (salaries)	367,440
Administration of justice (salaries)	153,848
Legislation	65,620
Public institutions (maintenance)	229,116
Hospitals and charities	200,000
Administration of justice (other than salaries)	172,050
Education	614,560
Transport	37,000
Revenue services	40,000
Public Works—	
Works and buildings	686,475
Government House	5,600
Roads, streets, bridges and wharves	1,482,585
Subsidies to steamboats, ferries and bridges	16,440
Surveys and improvement of lands	560,000
Contingencies	100,000
Miscellaneous	384,240
Total	$5,615,798

Among the civil government votes are $1,500 for the lieut.-governor's office, $4,520 for the premier's office, $12,140 for the provincial secretary's department, $24,620 for department of mines, $36,720 for finance and agriculture department (which includes salaries for two new officials, a live stock commissioner and a horticulturist and assistant inspector, each at $1,500), $40,220 for the lands department, $26,600 for the public works department, $12,020 for the attorney-general's department, $50,400 for the land registry offices (which includes staff for an office at Prince Rupert—registrar at $2,100, chief clerk at $1,620 and clerk at $1,200), $3,000 for the legislative library.

The education vote includes $537,980 per capita grant, and $33,440 for the free text book branch. Provision is made for the salaries of a principal and four teachers at Prince Rupert, from $1,200 down to $720.

For repairs to the parliament buildings, $3,000 is to be voted and $7,000 for the improvement of the government grounds. A quarter million is set aside for a new court house at Vancouver, $121,500 for a new hospital for the insane, besides $8,000 for repairs to the old building, $10,000 for a land and registry office at Prince Rupert, and $25,000 for rebuilding Fernie court house.

For roads, streets, bridges and wharves throughout the province there is a total vote of $1,482,585. In the allotment of this the Liberal constituencies fare much better than for many years, leading, as was stated yesterday, to the surmise that an election is pending. The votes for them are: Alberni, $28,000; Cariboo, $24,500, in addition to $20,500 for sections 5 and 6 of the Cariboo main road; Chilliwack, $19,800; Cranbrook, $25,000; Delta, $15,850; Esquimalt, $25,000; Greenwood, $10,800; Lillooet, $15,000, besides $20,000 for sections 3 and 4 of the Cariboo main road and $2,000 for the Lillooet-Lytton road; Skeena, $75,000; Yale, $25,000. For the Vancouver Island trunk road there is $35,000, for roads in South Vancouver and Point Grey $75,000, for a bridge over the Fraser river in Lillooet constituency a revote of $40,000; for Cowichan district, $11,860; Comox, $33,500; the Islands, $13,000; Nanaimo, $6,500; Newcastle, $13,000; for bridges generally $225,000, and for wharves generally $100,000.

For surveys and improvement of lands $560,000 is voted, of which $280,000 is for surveys generally, $200,000 for roads, sewers, etc., in Prince Rupert townsite and $80,000 for clearing land at Prince Rupert.

In the miscellaneous vote are $20,000 for game protection, $20,000 for logscaling, $7,000 for farmers' institutes, $10,000 for agricultural associations, $2,000 for fruit growers' associations and $5,000 for fruit exhibitions; $500 for the dairymen's associations, $250 for the flockmasters, $2,000 for Vancouver horse show towards prizes in the breeders' classes, $3,000 to the B. C. Agricultural Association in aid of the exhibition and $7,000 towards cost of new building; $700 to aid poultry shows, $3,000 to the Royal Agricultural and Industrial Society, $37,000 for forest protection and $5,000 for a commission to investigate timber and forestry matters; $5,000 for the board of investigation under the Water Act; $25,000 for salary increases to the civil service. Superannuation takes $7,140 and the agent-general's office $15,000.

The supplementaries for the current year contain $91,047.61 for the redemption of the dyking debentures, $140,000 for surveys and $164,700 for public works, included in which latter sum are $53,000 for the new Vancouver court house, $32,000 to complete the court house at Nelson and $13,400 for government buildings at Prince Rupert. There is $6,350.14 for the relief of sufferers by the Fernie fire, $10,000 grant to the city for municipal buildings and sidewalks and $25,000 for school buildings. The supplementaries for 1907-8 contain $10,000 for the province's grant towards the Quebec tercentenary.

MOUNT COLIMA IS NOT IN ERUPTION

Times Correspondent Denies Sensational Reports From Mexico City.

The Times is in receipt of a letter from a correspondent in Queseria, Estde Colima, which gives a denial to the reports recently circulated all over the continent that the volcano of Colima is in eruption. The reports which have appeared as dispatches sent out from Mexico city to the Associated Press stated that Colima was throwing out ashes and pumice stone, and furthermore that an earthquake had happened in the vicinity.

The correspondent, who has received a copy of the Times containing these reports, states that they are news indeed to one living within the shadow of the volcano. At present Colima is perfectly quiet, is covered with snow, and has not erupted since December 18th, when a tremendous explosion occurred, followed by a column of smoke which shot skywards, forming a magnificent spectacle. There have been on earthquake tremors in the vicinity for the last eight months.

Between three and four years ago Colima was in violent erruption, and the people living in the neighborhood fled in terror for their lives. There was no loss of life. The climate of Queseria, according to the Times correspondent, is like that of Victoria at its best, and is equable all the year round, except during the three months of "Las Agnas."

OPPOSITION TO INSURANCE BILL

Deputation Interviewed Provincial Government This Morning.

(From Tuesday's Daily.)

A deputation of lumber men and members of the boards of trade of the coast cities waited on the government this morning for the purpose of explaining why they considered the proposed fire insurance legislation should not be passed. E. V. Bodwell asked to be allowed to be present in order that he might know what opposition there was to the bill, but as objection was made to this he as well as the members of the press were asked to retire.

E. H. Heaps, of Vancouver, was the first to place the matter before the government. He told how difficult it had been to make reasonable arrangements in Vancouver with the old line companies. On this account his firm, in company with many others, had been forced to place their business outside, where they got much better terms, and the insurance was perfectly safe and satisfactory. He considered the present bill was not intended for the protection of the small insurer as claimed by the promoters, but on the contrary was for the purpose of capturing the larger business, as nearly all that business had been taken outside. Those opposed to the bill had taken no legal advice, and had had little opportunity of getting up their case. He was not prepared to condemn the bill in its entirety. He did not, however, think it right to try to push through legislation which had not previously been discussed by the public and the boards of trade of the province. Personally he was interested in insurance companies and he would favor any reasonable legislation.

R. B. McLennan, of Vancouver, gave experiences of his own to prove that in New York they were able to get insurance 40 per cent. cheaper than from the board companies.

Mr. Alexander, president of the Lumbermen's Association, endorsed what had already been said. The companies were making a point of the fact that Lloyds was not to be included within the scope of the bill, but he showed how useless this would be as a measure of relief.

A representative of the lumber business from New Westminster, also gave a number of facts and figures, producing documentary evidence in support of his case.

D. R. Ker spoke on behalf of the merchants of Victoria. He claimed that a monopoly would be created if the bill were allowed to go through, and he asked that it be allowed to lie over until another session in order that it might be thoroughly discussed in all its bearings.

The delegation then withdrew.

Captain and Mrs. Clive Phillips Wolley are guests at Glancoe lodge, Vancouver.

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LARGEST PRUNES, in fancy 10-lb. box $1.25
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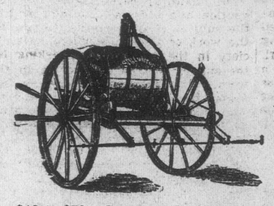

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CONFIDENCE EXPRESSED IN LOCAL MANAGEMENT

Audit of Electric Company's Offices Reported to Be Satisfactory.

(From Wednesday's Daily.)

G. Hope, of the B. C. Electric Company, who has been in Victoria for a day or two receiving the report of the independent audit made in the local office, in common with the offices in Vancouver and North Vancouver, will return to Vancouver to-night. Mr. Hope will report to his general manager and does not care to say much.

It is believed, however, that everything is very satisfactory and that as the result of a most rigid inspection it has been found that the conduct of the business has been attended without any fraud upon the company or upon the public.

It is understood that the independent audit, which has been initiated from the head office, will be continued from time to time. Under it the auditing staff steps into the places of the regular staff in any centre and transacts all the business while the audit is carried out. It is reported also that in future there may be a more frequent change of clerks among the different offices, similar to what is done in banks.

All that Mr. Hope would say concerning his visit was: "My report, as you can readily understand, is necessarily of a private nature and in fact is not yet ready, but I can say at once that it can only confirm the absolute confidence which the board feel in the local management

"Let me say with reference to the news item in the Times of Monday evening, I have been requested by R. H. Sperling, general manager, to emphatically deny the reported interview with him, and I can say from my own knowledge since I arrived here that there is no foundation for the statements attributed to Mr. Sperling.

"With regard to my visit here I have often been here before and made checks on the company's books, but on this occasion the check has been rather more extensive than on previous occasions as part of a system of independent internal audit initiated by the board of directors because of the growth in the company's operations in British Columbia generally.

"I might say," added Mr. Hope, "that one feature of the Victoria business which has been most satisfactory is the remarkable increase, which shows that Victoria is keeping to the front in its growth and development with the rest of British Columbia. More rolling stock is required here, and I think it has already been stated that at the present time there are six large cars of the new and improved type being built for early delivery to Victoria, while other important expenditures are under contemplation."

DEATH OF FIREMAN OF STEAMER BEAVER

William Rudland Came to Coast on Hudson's Bay Company's Vessel.

Prince Rupert, Feb. 17.—William Rudland, 85 years of age, and a native of Gravesend, England, died at his home in Metlakahtla, five miles from here, on Saturday morning, after a lingering illness. Mr. Rudland was a pioneer, coming to this country over 50 years ago on the Hudson's Bay Company's steamer Beaver, and on which he was employed as a fireman. Mr. Rudland leaves a widow and grown up family at Metlakahtla to mourn his loss.

UNTRUE REPORT.

No Privileges Have Been Withdrawn From Sailors on Coasting Vessels.

A statement having been made that certain privileges had been recently withdrawn from seamen engaged in the coasting trade, inquiry at the customs department elicited the information that seamen on coasting vessels never had the privilege of using the hospital. Only vessels trading to a foreign port are considered seamen under the act, and coasting vessels not visiting foreign ports are not taxed for sick dues. There has been no change of any kind made recently, but Dr. Godin, who recently inspected the hospital, reported that he would make certain recommendations, although he refused to state what they would be until he had handed them in to the government.

Some of the icefields of Greenland are said to be half a mile in thickness.

DIED.

THOMAS—In this city, on the 18th inst., at the family residence, 85[illegible] South Park street, John Thomas, aged 66 years, a native of Shropshire, Eng.

BOORMAN—In this city, on the 16th inst., at the family residence, 1328 Alfred street, William Scoones Boorman, a native of Wandsworth, England, in his 67th year.

CLARK—In this city, on the 15th inst., at the family residence, 952 Johnson St., Jane Sterling, beloved wife of James S. Clark, late of Japan, aged 66 years, a native of Scotland.

(Japan, China, Spanish and Home papers copy).

HOPE—At St. Joseph's hospital, on the 17th inst., Jane Reid (a native of Scotland), beloved wife of Rutherford Hope, Pender Island.