

last polling in every section of the country in their hands to show the clamant necessity for reform in the representation? Why then did they stoop to such a palpable trick, to the adoption of such a manifestly worthless pretext, to postpone for another year the fulfilment of the pledges given and reiterated? The answers to these queries will, we venture to say, be readily suggested to the minds of the intelligent people of British Columbia and we very greatly mistake, if, in the overwhelming majority of cases, these answers will not be anything but favorable to a belief in the bona fides of the Davie Government.

The defence of the Government's action, by its organs, the Colonist and the World, were significant. The former began by implying that, although representation by population might be the generally accepted principle on which elections should be based, yet it would never do to apply it to British Columbia. It labored hard to make good the position thus taken, but signally failed. Then, in a half-hearted manner, it argued that "postponement" did not mean "refusal" and that, in any case, it would do no harm to let things run on as they had been doing for a year. Finally it dropped the subject, after having relieved its feelings by giving the senior member for Vancouver the lie direct.

The World, as might have been expected, followed the method, which is one of the unwritten rules of procedure of the gentlemen of the long robe, who, when they have no case, abuse the counsel on the opposite side. Billingsgate is not only not logic but it is not even English, and little heed is to be given, as a general thing, to the utterances of a common scold.

Two terms were, however, employed by the partisans of the Government which call for animadversion. Those who were bold enough—or rather honest enough, let us say—to denounce the failure of the Government to keep its pledges and emphatically to express their determination to oppose the granting of the \$500,000 for Government buildings—"The Victoria Anchor Fund," as it might fitly be called—were characterized as "traitors," and the proposal to shake off Victoria and let it, like the proverbial tub, "stand on its own bottom" was stigmatized as "secession." In regard to the first word, it shows either that the men who used it were ignorant of the meaning of the term, or were laboring under the delusion that every citizen of British Columbia owes allegiance to the Premier and his ministry. A deeper depth of abject servility is hardly conceivable. The real "traitors" were, most unquestionably, the members of the House who betrayed the interests of their constituents by obeying the crack of the Government whip and voting for the "Victoria Anchor Fund." We mean certain members from the Mainland.

The term "secession" is entirely inapplicable to the proposed movement to "cut off" the Island of Vancouver from the rest of the Province. The majority does not secede when it shakes off an impracticable and overbearing minority.

The citizens of Vancouver will, in a few days, have an opportunity to declare their minds as to the city's guaranteeing the interest on the \$100,000 bonds of the Vancouver Electric Railway and Light Company, and it is hoped that few, if any, of the intelligent voters will fail to cast their ballots in favor of the proposed plan. The following are among the many cogent and obvious reasons that might be urged in support of the adoption of such a course, and it appears to THE OWL that they must suffice to convince every clear-headed citizen that the guaranteeing

of the interest is the very best thing that can be done, for the good of the City:

In the first place, it will insure the immediate extension of the street railroad system to Stanley Park, thus giving to all the citizens easy access to this charming pleasure resort.

In the second place, the entire sum now paid by the City for lighting will be retained in the hands of the council as a substantial guarantee for the payment of the interest on the bonds by the company.

Thirdly, the City's guarantee will liberate a large amount of local money now tied up in the concern, which amount will be rendered available for local purposes and foreign capital will be brought in to take its place at an easy rate of interest.

Fourthly, the present road-bed and appliances will be greatly improved. In fact \$100,000 will be expended in extensions during this year to the present system, so that, if, at any future time, the City should take over the concern, it would get the present plant, plus the extensions, at a price not exceeding cost, or, if the company failed to keep its agreement, then for \$100,000, no matter how valuable it might have become.

In short, that we may make the advantages of the proposed transaction perfectly clear to the readers of THE OWL, let us further explain that an absolute mortgage of all the Company's property is given to the City as a guarantee, and the City has, moreover, the power to take over said property for the bonded debt if the Company should fail to pay the regular interest or to carry out any part of the contract; the City has also the option of purchasing the aforesaid property, at the end of five or ten years, at cost; all franchises, good will and street privileges are to be extinguished; the sharing of profits exceeding 6 per cent is secured to the City,—and if the City maintains its present and past rate of growth it will take but a short time to reach that paying point; absolute control is secured to the city by its being empowered to supervise all expenditures for extensions and the disbursement of the money derived from the sale of the bonds; and, finally, the City will have the appointment of a director and auditor; to keep a check on the business of the company.

There could not be, THE OWL opines, a fairer business proposition or one more likely to result to the benefit of the City.

It is a significant fact that, since the arrival of the Premier in this City, to attend the court of Assize, the World has dropped its natural and fluent use of Billingsgate, and is now lavish of promises on behalf of the Government that everything will go all right "in a few months." From snarling and snapping and bloviating about "honorable men seated on two horns of a dilemma" it now "roars you as gently as any sucking dove." It was high time.

The Publishers of THE OWL regret that in issuing this, their initial number, they were delayed in consequence of being disappointed in securing the cuts on time. This, it is confidently expected will not occur again and "The Bird" will hoot in the same lively strain on the morning of the 15th inst.

The petition to the Gov.-General, asking, inter alia, that he forbid the iniquitous saddling of the Province with a load of debt in order to put frills on Victoria and anchor the capital there, is in circulation and is being readily and numerously signed by "men of honor" who are not a bit terrified by the prospect of being found "on both horns of a dilemma" nor in the least scared of the outpouring of the vials of wrath of the Vancouver World. Victoria has forced them to take this action in the interests of self-protection.