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TALKING SOUND SENSE

The Champions of Constitutional Government Address the Spring Ridge Electors.

Short, Sledge-Hammer Speeches by the Candidates, Mr. Eberts and Mr. Gordon Hunter.

To-morrow evening the Victoria theatre will again be the rallying place for the friends and supporters of constutional government, addresses being delivered by the three stalwart champions of the people of Victoria who are seeking re-election to the local house of assembly—Messrs. Turner, McPhillips and Hall. There can be no doubt that the building will be crowded, for as the poling date draws nearer, interest in the contest, upon which the eyes of all Canada are directed, warms to fever heat. Last night the Odd Fellows' hall, Fernwood road, was the scene of an enthusiastic gathering, the meeting partaking more of the character of a friendly and convincing talk with the electors than of a formal speech-making affair. Points were made without number by each of the speakers, and on the conclusion of the proceedings a resolution expressing fullest confidence in Messrs. Turner, Hall and McPhillips was proposed by Mr. McKeown, seconded by Mr. Hart, and unanimously adopted.

Mr. Ed. Bragg being chosen as chairman, opened the proceedings with a neat little speech in which he sought for all a courteous hearing, and regretted personally that the meeting had not been more liberally advertised, in which event every chair in the hall would undoubtedly have been occupied. The neglect of some one to make the fact of the meeting better known unquestionably was to blame for the light attendance—for not half a dozen people in Spring Ridge knew beforehand that a meeting was to be held.

Touching on the questions of the hour, the chairman thought Messrs. Turner, Hall and McPhillips entitled to re-election at the hands of the people of Victoria. As a British subject he was a believer through and through in the principle of fair play, and he did not regard it as fair play from which the present situation had been evolved. In the first place when the general election resulted in a very close margin for either side, the then Premier (Mr. Turner) had a constitutional right to take the verdict of the people from the people's elected representatives at the meeting of parliament. Instead of this the Lieut.-Governor had taken it upon himself to speak for the people, and had made the most peculiar stand a representative of the Queen had ever taken. As a representative of the Queen it was his duty to protect the constitution and preserve his office from all political bias. This he had done. Instead, he had cast common sense to the winds, and called upon a member and supporter of neither party—Hon. Mr. Beaven, who had run as an independent and met overwhelming defeat in Victoria city. The correspondence touching Mr. Beaven's effort to form a government—he loving power as any man does—proved very interesting reading, doubly so in consequence of the prominent part played therein by "my son William," who certainly expected to be Attorney-General if his father's original plans had not miscarried. There could be no reasonable explanation for the call to Mr. Beaven in any event; if the Lieut.-Governor felt satisfied that Mr. Turner and his colleagues had lost the confidence of the people, certainly it was Mr. Semlin, (as leader of the opposition force) who was entitled to be called upon, and not Mr. Beaven. But Mr. Beaven failed to form an administration, and as he could not go back to Mr. Turner, the Lieut-Governor was forced to Mr. Semlin, who having the support of a shrewd politician in the person of Joseph Martin of Vancouver, was more successful. To this Mr. Martin the whole of the present trouble could be ascribed, for until his advent such tactics as had been witnessed of late had never been heard of in British Columbia. There was this to be remembered, however, that the same right that had been exercised by other constituencies similarly placed, belongs to Victoria—they should at once restore to the house the three members who had been chosen by Victoria, and who only were compelled to return to the people in consequence of a strained technicality.

MR. HALL.

Mr. Richard Hall, the first of the three candidates to take the platform, was terse and epigrammatic in his remarks. He presented himself with his colleagues as standing for constitutional government, and he asked that the electors of Victoria send one or all back to the house, to which they had been sent by vote of the people of Victoria at the general election. In any event he urged the electors of the Capital City not to split their votes, thereby nullifying the power of the city in the legislature. He was fully assured that he and his colleagues would be returned—more confident by far than he had been at the previous election, for there were people voting with them now who had vigorously opposed them when they had last come to the people, the issue being now as to whether British Columbia should continue to enjoy representative government or be dominated by one man. He knew of men who admitted having voted against Mr. McPhillips before, but who voluntarily came forward now and said that he would have their votes with his companions in the fight. And this was right, for no one could deny that Mr. McPhillips was a gentleman eminently qualified to be a representative of Victoria—a man of energy, honor, ability and sound sense. The government candidates were doing plenty of fine talking with the intention of catching the votes of the "workingman," but if the workers would sit down and quietly investigate, they would find that Mr. McPhillips was saying less but doing more for the working class than those who talked so much; he was the kind of man who put his hand down in his pocket to help a man out, while these others were doing their tall talking about the "workingman," and a man who let his actions speak for him in matters of this kind was a fairly safe man to stand by. Touching upon the "hybrid government of expediency" and the claims its members were making in behalf of their candidates that they were entitled to the Liberal vote, he strongly disputed the assertion. He was a Liberal himself, and he held that, upon his record as a member of the party, he was quite as much entitled to every Liberal vote in the city as Mr. Stewart, Mr. Paterson or Col. Gregory. He was a business man of the city, too, and had made a success of his own business, which was, as it had always been, identified with the general business life of Victoria. The gentlemen of this new government of British Columbia were not essentially business men, and appeared to have been so busy since taking office in counting salaries to which they had not previously been accustomed that they had forgotten the work of the country. They posed as the friends of the workingman, yet was their record? Almost the first thing they had done on assuming power was to discharge the few men who were improving the government grounds, in order to save the small pittance of the wages, leaving the grounds with trees as they had fallen weeks ago—a disgrace to the city and province. The snow had come and had been left lying on the roof, where its weight found a flaw in the slates and a leak that caused perhaps $300 or $400 worth of damage—because the government so friendly to the "workingman" could not think of paying for the labor of two men at $2 a day to clean off the snow, as a private individual would have done. The government claimed that their policy was one of economy; he did not call this economy, and the only policy he could see they possessed was a policy of disorganization—the rooting up of technicalities to defeat the spirit of the wish of the people in every possible way, if only the ends of the expediency government could be thereby furthered. Was this a policy to be contrasted with the development and expansion policy of their predecessors in the charge of British Columbia's affairs? He was a Canadian through and through; he was a British Columbian, and first and foremostly he was a Victorian all the time. He was prepared to stand by the city where all his interests lay, and he wanted the support of his friends to do this and to battle for sound government of and by the people. The other districts in which members had lost their seats through similar technicalities had seen the justice of returning them as soon as the opportunity was given them, and Victoria owed it to herself to take a similar action.

Generous applause was accorded Mr. Hall during and at the conclusion of his address, and "Bob" Porter crowed his indulgence of the chair and the meeting to then deliver his personal opinion of the Attorney-General.

MR. McPHILLIPS.

Mr. McPhillips was received with a cordial burst of applause. He devoted himself chiefly to the arraignment and disproof of the assertions of the government speakers in the fight. First of all with regard to the declaration that the government had not said that it was contemplated to reduce the representation of the Island or Vancouver in the house. It had been distinctly stated by Mr. C. B. Sword during his Cowichan candidature that the Island was over-represented, and the Premier had on that occasion lent his support to Mr. Sword with the declaration that he had the ear of the government. Mr. Martin now entered a positive denial, but it was significant that Hon. Mr. Semlin, still the leader of the government, had made no denial, and in the absence of a better explanation than that afforded by the Attorney-General the people of Victoria would do well to remember the Premier's stand. Then the statement had been made that the opposition candidates and party would oppose the increase of the Mainland representation no matter how population grew there in comparison with that of the Island. He thought that the history and record of the Turner government redeemed it from the charge of unfairness in this respect, for it had been through them that the representation of the Mainland had been increased to 24 from 14, while the Island voting strength remained at the old figure. Mr. Belyea had said at the general election that the Turner government should be condemned because of the $5,000,000 loan not a dollar was to be spent on the Island. Did not the charge of sectionalism thus find itself disproved out of the mouth of a government orator? The fact was that the Turner policy looked to the upbuilding of all and every part of the province—it was bold and progressive and fair to every section, and this was what British Columbia wanted.

Passing next to the iniquitous bill by which two members had been nailed to seats in the house by a party majority, Mr. McPhillips showed how radically dissimilar the measure just put upon the statute book was to the bill enacted during the regime of the Davie government, consenting to the agreement reached between the petitioner and respondent, by which Mr. Prentice, although an opponent of the government of that day, had been permitted to take his seat. The very preamble of the bill of 1895 showed how far from a parallel it was, for this read: "and whereas the petitioner and respondent have consented to this act." Assuredly neither Mr. Stoddart nor Mr. George B. Martin had consented to this new act, setting at naught the process of the courts and seating Messrs. Prentice and Deane. Yet the government supporters had now the colossal nerve to get upon the platform and declare these two measures parallel. There was no element in the bill of the Davie time that could be compared with the iniquitous bill of the present session, a bill that was against the law, against all precedent, against the wishes of the petitioners, against the conscience of the members of the house and against the will of the free electorate as would be shown at the polls on the 2nd of February.

Once again, the government champions in this contest had accused the opposition of misrepresentation in saying that their speakers were attempting to hold out inducements to secure Victoria's allegiance for the government on the score of favors to come. If this was not the fact, what did Mr. Higgins' words mean when he said that "it was in the interest of Victoria to return three government candidates." Mr. Higgins at the same time had declared for the present government as one that would rid the country of monopolies—yet he had taken good care to make no mention of that fine water monopoly of his own in Alberni. The readers of the Times would conclude that all the government speakers in the present contest were most polished orators—so Mr. Bodwell was described, so Mr. Paterson, so Mr. Gregory. Indeed Mr. Stewart was the only one to escape, and it could be said for him that he showed more common sense than all the others together, for had he not for one thing placed himself on record as favoring the construction of railways for the opening up of the country—one of the chief planks in the Turner policy but in direct antipathy to the so-called policy of the government of to-day?

The government of the day appeared to have no broader policy than saving pennies; Micawber-like, they could not understand how it was possible in safety to spend more than 16 shillings and six if one had a pound, no matter how necessary or secure an investment for a return might be. Suspending railway building for the development of the resources of the province meant an immense loss to the "workingman," of which he would do well to take cognizance, weighing in mind what it would mean to him to continue in the charge of British Columbia's affairs this government of mistaken economy, instead of placing the power of administration with a government of energy and progressive ideas. Another statement that had been made—and by Mr. Bodwell, too, who should certainly have known better—was that Mr. Eberts, when the Lieutenant-Governor had declined to sign certain warrants, threatened that in that event he would sign them himself. To say such a thing was to talk utter nonsense, as Mr. Bodwell as a lawyer knew. There was one thing in Mr. Bodwell's speech with which he could agree, however, and that was when he was moved to prophecy, and said that "the Turnerites are appealing to the people of Victoria, and he would be very much mistaken if the people did not repeat their verdict." (Applause). "The reign of the adventurer and the unscrupulous promoter is at an end," continued Mr. Bodwell, and he could only hope in all earnestness that this would be found true. To give a little attention to Col. Gregory, the bright particular star of the government candidates, he had himself declared that "he was not sufficiently gifted with the powers of speech to deal with the issues" of the present hour, and this admission being taken as true—for was it not the man's own estimate of his own ability?—he could it be safe to trust Victoria's interests into his keeping? Having touched upon these several instances, he was quite prepared to agree with Mr. Turner or any one else who said that the government supporters were making this campaign upon a tissue of falsehood. The government's friends had said that the province had suffered through assistance and land grants given by the late government to encourage railway construction—and yet the very men who were now making the charge were the lawyers who had represented the assisted railway companies before the former government, and who—if the charge were true—had been the very ones to do their utmost to secure the giving away of the interests of the province by every argument at their command. Col. Gregory had made the statement that the new government, although its life had been short, had already legislated for the benefit of the workingman. What had it done? Nothing but reduce the salary of the worker, or dismiss him from his employment altogether. This was beneficial with a vengeance. The speech from the throne and the declared policy of the government, if it could be called a policy, contained absolutely nothing in the interest of the workingman, and the workingman could see so for himself. Parsimony did not mean good management, for with a new and undeveloped country, rich in its varied and magnificent resources, discounting the future was legitimate and essential to progress, the only policy of an energetic and intelligent administration. The Micawber policy was not the one to advance British Columbia in the present stage of its existence. Referring to the charge that if the alien exclusion from the mines was found to conflict with higher policy, the bill might easily be disallowed, Mr. McPhillips maintained that it was both wrong and injudicious in the extreme for the province to venture upon a course of this character, having a tendency to weaken the federal power and achieve no good result. The whole point appeared to be that this legislation, although it might have some good features, had been brought forward by the Attorney-General for the purpose of embarrassing the government at Ottawa in the furtherance of his personal ambitions, and if this being the case, the eyes of all Canada would be directed to Victoria on Thursday, to see whether or not she proposed to lend aid to the turbulent politician and disturber of the peace who now strove to make this fair province the tool of his ambition, not fearing even to bring the province into conflict with the federal authorities. For his plans to be successful meant the sacrifice of British Columbia, for with reports going abroad daily of British Columbia and the Dominion in antagonism, legislation in conflict with Imperial authority, miners' licenses and vested rights at the mercy of a government's whim, the flow of capital excluded from the country, British Columbia's credit could not but rapidly decline, and ruin and bankruptcy for the province would be the inevitable rsult. He urged the people of Victoria to stand firm on Thursday for the three candidates seeking re-election, and good government by the people.

Mr. D. M. Eberts, M.P.P., referred in his introductory remarks to the insolent attack that had been made upon him, and which had been briefly touched upon by the previous speaker in his comments upon Mr. Bodwell's remarks. No man would ever accuse him of such an action, or of being a liar without getting it straight between the eyes. He had had respect for Mr. Bodwell, but if that gentleman had said that he threatened that if the Lieut.-Governor would not sign those warrants he (Mr. Eberts) would sign them himself, Mr. Bodwell had said what was untrue, well knowing that his words were untrue. He had challenged the government and he did so once again—to appoint a commission to investigate the whole matter of these warrants, confident that such a commission, however constituted, could not but vindicate his own course and that of the late government. Personally he was abundantly satisfied that the Lieut.-Governor had hoodwinked Hon. Mr. Beaven, telling him a pack of lies to induce him to take the stand that he had, and against his natural opinion as a thoughful and well-informed man. He had asked Mr. Beaven at the time if he honestly believed that John Herbert Turner had been or would be guilty of such a thing as passing in blank warrants for signature, and Mr. Beaven had said that it certainly looked peculiar. He could not believe it, nor did he, nor did he believe it for one moment to-day. The thing was so utterly ridiculous that even Mr. Cotton, now Finance Minister, laughed at it as utterly preposterous. Explaining briefly the method of payment by warrant, Mr. Eberts pronounced the whole principle of the late government's dismissal as in contradiction of the spirit of fair play, truth and justice between the leader of the late government, who was also Finance Minister, and the Queen's representative in the province. Mr. Bodwell if he had made the statement credited to him well knew it to be contrary to truth and the law. The Attorney-General had no power to sign warrants; his authority in the matter was defined by statute clearly. The auditor-general prepared the warrant and if in doubt as to the applicability to a certain specific vote to the particular warrant under consideration was required to take and be guided by the written opinion of the Attorney-General. The same applied under the statutes of Canada, and the Minister of Justice was frequently called upon in cases of this kind precisely. He dared the government of the day to nominate a commission, even if it be composed entirely of their own followers, to pronounce upon this matter of the warrants. Another point in the same subject was that it had been attempted to pervert a portion of the $6,000 vote for sick and destitute, a vote that had wisely and in the spirit of true charity been carried on the statute book from year to year. The ladies of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches at Westminster had established an hospital for the special treatment of women, the general hospital at the Royal City having no women's ward, and as this hospital was doing an undenominational work of charity it had been clear to him that the purpose of the vote would well be furthered in the giving of the $750 in question to this hospital. The proposition was exactly similar where the hospital conducted by the Roman Catholic sisters at Rossland received assistance, so much per day, for each poor person treated. Like assistance was given Dr. Brouse's hospital at New Denver, the Greenwood City hospital, and others where a general hospital was an impossibility, but where nevertheless no good government would allow a man to die or to suffer from sickness simply because he was unfortunate or low in funds. These then were the three charges upon which the government had been dismissed, and in regard to which the former Premier and his colleagues had memorialized the Dominion government, asking for an immediate investigation. That this had not been forthcoming was proof in itself that the authorities recognized that there was nothing in the charges or any of them. He would not go so far as to stigmatize the Lieut.-Governor's statements as "a tissue of lies," but he would say that they were statements that should never have been made, stigmatizing an honorable gentleman who had for forty years been an honored citizen of Victoria. Mr. John Herbert Turner, as unfit to hold the reins of government in consequence of dishonesty. Such a statement was unpalatable to and would be properly resented by the people of Victoria, and even the opponents of the late government realized that not one dollar had been illegally spent by the government that had been replaced by the Lieut.-Governor's action. What was the fact before British Columbians to-day. Where the cry before the general election had been all of corruption and crookedness on the part of the government, had there been a single instance of the smallest crookedness brought to light now that the enemies of Mr. Turner and his party had had the opportunity of possessing themselves of every scrap of information in connection with their management of the country's business. Where was the promised exposure of grave boodling in connection with a bonus of thousands to a Victoria contractor? Where were the sensational disclosures in connection with the parliament buildings cost? He challenged proof of a single dollar misapplied and the challenge would not be taken by his opponents.

Passing on to Mr. Bodwell, Mr. Eberts proceeded to illustrate how his opinion of the Turner government had experienced a sudden change just as soon as he found that that government had determined to preserve the wealth of the Boundary creek country for Canada and British Columbians, instead, as Mr. Bodwell desired, of giving it over to his client, Mr. D. C. Corbin, of Spokane. The Corbin road would have been a fatal or at all events a serious blow to a road opening the country to Canadian enterprise, built by Canadians and contributing to Canadian trade, and the government accordingly stood by our own country and asked the Dominion government by resolution not to grant the American road its charter. The application was refused by the House of Commons, despite the fact that the government was friendly to Mr. Bodwell, and from the day that his plans on behalf of Mr. Corbin and Spokane, as against the interests of British Columbia, were opposed by Mr. Turner's government, might be dated Mr. Bodwell's antipathy to that government. With reference next to the contentions of the government forces that they had given to British Columbia a secret ballot, Mr. Eberts maintained that the present ballot (supported by all sections of the house, for all were desirous of having the most secret ballot possible) was no improvement upon the old ballot, while indeed the percentage of spoiled ballots had been increased fully 50 per cent. since its introduction. The present talk of the secret ballot that had been given the country through the efforts of those now forming the government party could be set down as so much clap-trap intended merely for the catching of votes. The pernicious Elections Petitions bill came in for arraignment in its course, the speaker contending that the law and precent of England should be good enough for British Columbia, and that the course that had been taken in this regard by the present government would never have been dared by any premier of England. He defied the production of any precedent from constitutional history, and held that it ill became the province of British Columbia to attempt to set aside the rule for the protection of the people's liberties that had been perfected and protected in the old land during 300 or 400 years. Going into the case of Mr. Prentice in detail, Mr. Eberts showed how it could not be possible for a court to give any other verdict than that he was disqualified—hence the mad haste of the government to rush through their iniquitous bill, take the trial of the issue out of the hands of the court, seat two men in the house, thus retain their majority and save the Lieutenant-Governor from the necessity of receding from a position taken in defiance of constitutional law and practice. In closing, he promised that the end of the matter had not yet been reached, and called upon Victorians to stand by the government that had made the upbuilding of British Columbia its constant endeavor, while protecting the laws that were the bulwarks of the people's liberties—by returning Messrs. Turner, Hall and McPhillips on Thursday next.

"It seems to me," said the chairman, as Mr. Eberts resumed his seat amidst prolonged applause, "that in 'Fighting Joe' the government has no monopoly of the hard political fighters"—a sentiment that was cordially endorsed by the crowd with renewed applause.

MR. HUNTER.

Mr. Gordon Hunter pointed the electors present to the fact that they were upon the eve of the most momentous crisis British Columbia had ever experienced—a crisis in which he conceived it to be the duty of every Liberal to come forward and cast his vote in the interest of justice, constitutional government and fair play. If Liberals and Conservatives joined hands and returned Messrs Turner, Hall and McPhillips what would be the result? Mr. Turner would return to the house with a greatly increased strength; at the same time there was a seat vacant in Nelson, and another in East Kootenay, and with the distintegrating movement in the ranks of the government, it would not be long before Mr. Turner would be back in his proper place, and the Lieut.-Governor called upon to justify if he can his tyrannous everriding of the constitution—and in the event of his prostitution of his high office being proved, his early dimittance by the federal authority. Precedent was found where a lieutenant-governor by the merest blunder had unconstitutionally dismissed a government, and had paid for his error with his official head. The present case was different, for he thought Lieut.-Governor McInnes' act was not a blunder, but premeditated, and for the benefit of one of his own tribe originally. Victory in the present contest meant much—as a deterrent upon the Lieut.-Governor, and an indication of the feeling of the people which would not be without its effect in the contests to follow. He would not have much to say of the Attorney-General in passing, save this—that although a Liberal to the core, if it ever came to that pass when Liberal and Conservative lines prevailed in local politics—a day he hoped far distant—he would prefer placing the rankest old Tory that ever breathed in charge of the country's affairs to giving them into the guidance of Joe Martin. Reviewing the legislation of the present government, the speaker showed it to contain nothing save a violation of constitutional rights and all precedents. The Elections Petitions bill when it was passed was a scandal to the province, and when the Lieut.-Governor gave this measure the assent, he joined hands with Joe Martin in striking a sledge-hammer blow at the rights of the people. Then came the alien exclusion from the placer mines, which was essentially weak in its failure to provide for the protection of companies from losses to their properties should they incur the enmity of the government—also in its failure to protect bona fide purchasers of mining properties. On these grounds it was quite competent for the Dominion authorities to disallow it, and he held that it had only been brought in to embarrass the federal government in their present negotiations at Washington, being part of the scheme of Joe Martin in his Dominion ambitions. His flying trip East, too, had been taken as with the object of throwing the apple of discord into the sealing negotiations, and Victorians would find it infinitely to their advantage to support the Turner party and policy as against throwing their interests to the wind, with the sole object of furthering the personal plans and ambitions of Joe Martin, which no one could describe as identified with the interests of Victoria.

MR. TURNER.

Mr. Turner closed the meeting with a stirring campaign speech, in which he endorsed the observation of the chairman that the opposition of to-day had good fighters to speak for them—fighters, too, who would not hit below the belt. This was the policy of the government party in such cards as one he held in his hand, in which it was alleged that he (Mr. Turner) had endeavored to hold the reins of power after he had ceased to command a majority in the house. This he denied; he had ever been prepared to go to the house and take the verdict of the elected representatives of the people. He was not prepared, however, to take the dictum of the man at Carey Castle, desirous of furthering his personal ends. Nor had he been in a minority at the time the Lieutenant-Governor had asked for his resignation, for the returns at that time showed the standing of the parties to be 18 to 18, with two petitions pending. It had been asked in the course of the campaign what had the government of to-day done that the people of Victoria could cavil at. What had the three elected representatives of Victoria done that they should not be confirmed in their seats. This was the question for Victorians to answer. Did they wish to swallow their words of last July? For to return even one supporter of the present government would be to give Victoria the worst blow the city and its good name ever received. The utter emptiness of the government programme was shown in sharp contrast with the explicit and vigorous policy for the development of the country initiated and carried on by the late government, and taking up one of the latest personal attacks of the government press, Mr. Turner proceeded to make plain the exact standing of his firm with reference to the Nelson drain pipe matter that the Times had latterly been making much of, alleging that the name of his partner, Mr. Kirk, had been used to cover up a transaction with the government out of which his firm had derived profit. The fact was that there had been a sanitary inspection of the Kootenays, an inspector appointed by the board of health going there to see that the welfare of the inhabitants was safeguarded. Sickness and great trouble were found at Nelson, chiefly because of a large open drain. This the board of health decided should be replaced immediately with vitrified pipe, which was ordered but which would have to be rushed through to its destination with special despatch in order to be received before the advent of winter. Mr. Thomson, manager of Turner, Beeton & Co.'s Nelson house, was communicated with, as he had made a special study of the freighting system, and Mr. Kirk being in Nelson at the time, had wired to the firm in Victoria, asking if, for the benefit of Nelson, it would be seen to that the pipes were sent along at once, the order being placed with the Pottery & Terra Cotta Co. It was necessary, in order to have the shipment go forward at once, for the firm (for Mr. Kirk, who had taken the matter up privately) to assume the responsibility for the freight charges, which was done. The order was promptly executed, and on the 20th and 21st of November the pottery company furnished pipe to the amount of $1,333. This was taken to the wharf, and special handling to ensure rapidity of forwarding here and where the transfer to the train at Seattle involved increased expense; $190.38 was paid in porters' and wharf expenses of this nature, while the firm at Nelson paid for Mr. Kirk, who had gone in the meantime, $1,078 in freight charges to the Nelson & Fort Sheppard Railway Company. A total of $3,253 in all was paid out to assist the City of Nelson in getting its pipe with all speed, the Pottery Company being obliged, to complete the order, to get $650 worth of pipe from the Douulton Company—nor did the firm, who had simply acted as forwarders to secure despatch for Mr. Kirk, in this personal matter, get the money back for upwards of a year. The vouchers throughout would show that Turner, Beeton & Co. had all through acted only as forwarders without a cent of charge in order to facilitate the enterprise and secure the preservation of the health of the city of Nelson. He mentioned this matter in detail in order that the people might understand it fully and thoroughly, and because the government press had grossly misrepresented the action taken in it. It regard to the aliens in mines bill, he certainly favored holding for British Columbians all possible of their own country, but thought the stand taken by the present government on this matter was in sharp contrast with their desire to give D. C. Corbin and the state of Washington people a practical monopoly of the quartz wealth of the Boundary Creek country. As to his declarations on the aliens in placer mines bill, he had seen a long story in the Post-Intelligencer purporting to be an interview with him, the result of a five-minute conversation had by the Post-Intelligencer correspondent. The interview had been made up largely by the same process that had enabled a Province reporter in less than a five-minute chat to build up a column and a half, the greater part of which was utter nonsense, which he had neither said nor thought. He condemned the government for neglect of British Columbia's interests in not having sent a representative of the province to the sealing conference, and closed with a strong appeal to the electors to support the straight ticket—Hall, McPhillips and Turner.

CITY SCHOOL BOARD.

Salaries of the High School Teachers and Physical Instructor to Be Raised.

Proposed Amendments to the School Act Adopted by the Trustees.

The board of school trustees, with Chairman McMicking presiding, held a special meeting yesterday afternoon to deal with regular business left over from the meeting last week.

Mrs. J. Campbell, of 95 Douglas street, drew attention to the necessity of providing for the education of deaf and mute children, of whom there are quite a number in the city. This letter had been handed to Superintendent Eaton, and he reported that the question was one which required the attention of either the provincial government, the city or the public. There was formerly a grant by the provincial government to provide for the education of such children, but the grant had been allowed to lapse. He understood that there was a young lady in the city, herself deaf and mute, who had been educated, and he believed she would undertake to instruct the children for a small salary. The superintendent recommended that a committee be appointed to interview the Women's Council and see if the money could not be raised.

Superintendent Eaton said there was one portion of his report which required correction. He understood that last year the provincial government had sent several children East.

The letter and report were referred to the management committee to interview the government.

Miss S. R. Crease, acting corresponding secretary of the Women's Council, asked that provision be made for salaries for teachers of sewing and cooking.

It was decided to ask the council of public instruction to place the two subjects on the curriculum.

The management committee reported as follows:

To the Board of Trustees:

The school management committee reports upon the various matters referred, recommending as follows:

1. That the salary of Miss Blackburn be fixed at $450, and Miss Harrop's at $540 for the current year.

2. That Mr. St. Clair's salary be increased to $600 in consideration of the work he has undertaken to do in the direction of manual training.

3. That Mr. Paul's salary be increased to $1,440, Mr. Pineo's to $1,200 and Miss Watson's to $1,000.

4. That the limits of the Spring Ridge school district be defined by the following boundaries:

West—Quadra street to Frederick.
South—Frederick, Putnam, Bodwell and Grant streets to Belmont avenue.
East—Belmont street, Haughton street, to Edmonton road.
North—Edmonton road and Queens avenue to Quadra.

5. That Kingston street school premises be put in through repair, and a female teacher, holding a first-class certificate, be advertised for; duties to begin February 1.

6. That, with a view to the introduction of singing as a regular subject of instruction in all classes of the graded schools, the teachers be requested to qualify themselves as soon as possible in the tonic sol fa system of notation.

7. That the Telephone Company be directed to remove the telephone now in the Spring Ridge school to the office of the school board in the City hall, and that payment by the board for the telephone in the secretary's office be hereafter discontinued.

Respectfully submitted.

LEWIS HALL,
A. L. BELYEA,
W. MARCHANT,
School Management Committee.

January 30, 1899.

In answer to Mrs. Gordon Grant, Trustee Marchant said the increase in salaries did not include all the increases proposed.

The increase in the salaries in the High school amounts to $340.

The report was adopted.

The proposed amendments to the School act submitted by the board of aldermen and agreed to by the trustees in conference were taken up and adopted after being amended.

Trustee Belyea explained the amendments, the principal one of which provides that the city shall hand over to the trustees the per capita grant from the government and the special tax of three mills on the dollar which the council is to ask the legislature to give them power to levy. It was explained that under the law as it stood, if the council had a surplus they could vote any portion of it for school purposes. This they could not do under the amendments, so that any extraordinary expenditure for school purposes must go before the people. Such a contingency is not likely to arise, however, as Trustee Belyea said that this year, with the per capita tax and three mills, and placing the expenditure at $50,000, there would be a surplus of from seven to nine thousand dollars.

This could be carried over until next year, said Trustee McCandless, and then with the imposition of another mill on the dollar, there would be sufficient to build a new High school.

It was pointed out that the council proposed to amend the clause which protected creditors of the school board by throwing the onus of meeting the debt on the city council. The council's attention will be drawn to this, and if the clause is amended creditors of the board will have no protection.

The trustees will ask for power to appoint an auditor, and will also ask to be given until March 1 to present their estimates to the council.

Trustee Belyea proposed an amendment providing that the city council shall pay every year to the school board the full amount of the per capita grant and the full amount of the three mills on the dollar assessed and levied, irrespective of whether they collect it.

The proposed amendment was adopted, so that the council will have to pay more to the school board each year than they collect, as the full amount levied is never paid in the same year.

The board will meet again on Friday evening to consider the report of the finance committee on the grading of the teachers' salaries.

THE CRISIS IN THE CHURCH.

A Manifesto From Some English Evangelical Leaders.

The London Times publishes the following: "We, the undersigned presbyters of the Church of England, as by law established, occupying positions of official ministerial responsibility in the same, feel that we should be wanting in duty, not only to the members of our church, but to our fellow Christians and fellow countrymen generally, partakers with us of the like faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, if we did not come forward at this critical time in reliance upon the helo of the Holy Spirit of truth, for the purpose of exhorting our brethren in the ministry to adhere to the doctrine and ritual of our church, as the same have been commonly received and as they are set forth in its public services and its articles of religion

"We would not be understood to claim perfection for those services and articles, or to extend that they are incapable of improvement in the way of alteration and addition; but we maintain, as a principle applicable to all cases which have formed, or may form, the subject of doubtful discussion in the highest courts of the church and realm, that opinions, though held by men of acknowledged piety and learning, ought not to be authoritatively taught by the clergy as expressing the mind of our church unless they shall first have been accepted by the lawful authority of the church and realm and declared by the same to rest on the sure warrant of Holy Scripture.

"We maintain that the like authority should be required for any alterations of or additions to the formularies of our church

"We submit for the serious consideration of our brethren that, whatever opinions may have been held by other churches, or by pious and learned members of our own, concerning mysterious presence of the Lord with or under the elements of bread and wine, after they have been consecrated with the words of the institution and prayer, no presence is recognized by our church save that unto life and salvation which by the operation of the Holy Ghost, is only to be found in the heart of the faithful and penitent receiver; that no sacrifice is recognized by our church in the holy communion other than those of praise and thanksgiving and of themselves their souls and bodies, which the minister and the communicants alike offer in reliance upon the one propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ finished upon the cross, and as a memory of the same; that our church teaches no mediation other than that of our Lord Jesus Christ as coming between the worshippers and a gracious God and Father, who with the Son and the Holy Ghost is the alone object of adoration.

"We cannot refrain from offering a word of caution to our brethren as to hearing confession in their ministerial capacity other than that special confession, which alone is authorized by our church in the office for the visitation of the sick—viz., 'when the conscience is troubled with some weighty matter,' or that 'opening of grief' by an intending communicant who cannot 'quiet his own conscience,' but requires 'further comfort and counsel' to the avoiding of all scruple or doubtfulness.'

"In this statement of our convictions, and in this word of exhortation to our brethren, our consciences witness to no other than a single desire to maintain the truth as it is in Jesus, and to maintain it in a spirit of love towards all, and of doubtful submission to those who are over us in the Lord. We desire to uphold the bishops, the chief pastors of our church, in the exercise of their lawful jurisdiction. At the same time we would guard our fellow-ministers and our lay brethren against all assertion of liberty in doctrine and worship, which, we fear, will endanger, not only episcopal authority and the authority of the synods, but the very independence of the church itself.

"That the Lord may of His mercy keep us in the way of truth, or holiness and peace, is the earnest prayer of the undersigned:

"W. F John Kaye, M.A., Archdeacon of Lincoln.
"W. F. Taylor, D.D., Archdeacon of Liverpool.
"J. Hughes-Games, D.D., Vicar of Hull, formerly Archdeacon of Man.
"H. C. G. Moule, D.D., Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge, Honorary Chaplain to the Queen.
"H. W. Webb-Peploe, M.A., Prebendary of St. Paul's."

VANCOUVER, VICTORIA & EASTERN RAILWAY.

Sir: In the opera house on Friday evening at a meeting held by the supporters of the present government, Col. Gregory said in reference to the Vancouver, Victoria & Eastern railway that the line was divided into sections, and that one part could be built without the other. The object of Col. Gregory in making such a statement was to leave upon the minds of his hearers the doubt of one of the sections being built. No reason could be given for making such a statement only to throw doubts on the project.

The act of 1898 provides for the line to be divided into two sections, and also states that the Penticton portion shall be constructed first. Surely Col. Gregory must be in great straits when his associates endeavor to injure a project by making such flimsy statements without any reason or argument.

I shall quote the provisions of the act to show how unwarrantable Col. Gregory's and Mr. Paterson's objections are to the building of the Vancouver, Victoria & Eastern railway:

The Loan Act of 1898 provides (a) "for a standard gauge railway from Penticton to the Boundary Creek district, approximately one hundred miles in length.

(c) "For a standard gauge railway from the Coast in the neighborhood of English Bluff, from Point Roberts, via Chilliwack to Penticton, approximately two hundred and thirty miles."

Clause 9 of the act of 1898 also provides that the line from Penticton to Boundary shall be commenced first, which the company have done, notwithstanding the short time since the bill was assented to (May 20, 1898).

The company have made permanent surveys and several miles of the road has been graded and the other conditions of the government carried out.

Now we are met with opposition from Col. Gregory and Mr. Paterson. They no doubt intend to urge the present government to place obstacles in the way of the company, and try and nullify, if they can, the agreement entered into with the province. Mr. Paterson had said that the scheme is dead. On the contrary, I have shown it is very much alive, and Col. Gregory without any argument or reason says the road will not be built.

I ask the electors of Victoria what they think of such men, seeking as they do the support of the electorate of this city.

Do we want such representatives, who would if they could stop the construction of a railway which the citizens have been clamoring for for the last