PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE.

Second Session of the Sixth Parliament.

SEVENTH DAY.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 10, 1892.

The speaker took the Chair at 2 o'clock. Prayers by Rev. P. McLeod.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented:

MR. KELLIE—From Chas. Taylor and others re Nelson Waterworks.

MR. MARTIN—From Bishop Lemmens, for a private bill.

MR. HORNE—From H. Abbott and others, asking incorporation, as the North Vancouver Railway Company.

MR. SMITH—From the Western and Vancouver Tramway Company, for a private bill.

The petitions from the Esquimalt Telephone company, from Capt. Power and others, asking for a bill to enable them to build a short line between Westminster and Vancouver, from H. Abbott and others asking incorporation as the Columbia & Spokane Railway company, were read and received.

SCHOOL REPORT.

HON. MR. ROBSON presented to the House the 20th annual report of the Public schools of British Columbia.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.

The Standing Orders and Private Bills committee reported that the rules had been complied with, in the case of the following, viz.:

Petition for a private bill to operate, maintain and work waterworks in the town of Nelson, Kootenay district.

Petition for a private bill to construct and operate a system of electric lighting, etc., in the town of Nelson.

Petition for a private bill to amend the Esquimalt Waterworks Companies Act.

The committee reported, with reference to the petition of the City of Victoria, praying for leave to present a petition for leave to introduce a private bill, that taking into consideration the great importance of the subject matter of the proposed bills to the Municipality of the City of Victoria, leave be granted to present the said petition notwithstanding the non compliance with the rules of order.

The committee recommended that the time for receiving petitions for private bills, be extended for a period of ten days.

Report was received and adopted.

RESTRICTED RECIPROCITY.

COL. BAKER moved, seconded by Mr. Booth, that: "Whereas the natural wealth of British Columbia in minerals, in timber, in fish, and in other natural products, is very great; and whereas markets for such products are to be found in the United States; and whereas the import duty on some of such products into the United States practically closes the markets in that direction to commercial enterprise from British Columbia; and whereas the prosperity of British Columbia must depend to a great extent upon external trade; therefore, be it enacted, that an humble address be presented to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, praying him to move the Dominion Government to take such steps consistent with the commercial interests of this Dominion and the loyalty of the Canadian people, as may be deemed advisable to bring about unrestricted reciprocity with the United States in the aforesaid natural products.

COL. BAKER said—Mr. Speaker, I have been induced to move this resolution on account of the important bearing which the subject has upon the future commercial prosperity of the province. I think the time has now arrived when it may be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that the natural wealth of British Columbia in minerals, in timber, and in its fisheries is of such a magnitude that the future prosperity of the country may be considered as assured provided we can obtain the capital, the labor and the markets which are necessary to convert our natural resources from passive into active wealth. Now, sir, the most important of these necessary factors in the creation of a profitable trade is a ready market; because commercial enterprise has become so universal that, wherever vast natural resources and a ready market exist, there capital and labor are sure to follow.

When we turn to the question of a market for the products of British Columbia, our thoughts are naturally directed towards our neighbors in the United States, where we find a population of 70,000,000 people, who, living upon the same continent, are possessed with great desires and with abundance of capital. But, sir, we also find that there is an imaginary line drawn between the two peoples, who speak the same language, who are sprung from the same Mother Country, and that the moment they attempt to trade with each other across that imaginary line, they meet with a sudden check, amounting in some cases to a positive obstacle, in the form of prohibitive duties upon articles of commerce. It is so well established that it may be called a truism that, other things being equal, the magnitude of trade depends upon its area, and we have, therefore, to ask ourselves why it is that these two peoples should deliberately contract the area upon which their trade depends?

I think the answer to that question may be found in the fact that "protection" has a political origin. In former days, the manufacturer, like the centurion of old, said unto his workmen do this, and they did it; and when the time came for a general election of the, so-called, representatives of the people, the manufacturers, from the control which they possessed over the voting power of their employees, came to be regarded by politicians as the arbiters of their fate; hence it was that the interests of the manufacturers took precedence of the interests of the people, and protection was the result. But education and the ballot are producing a change in this respect, and the people, when they go to the hustings, are no longer so subservient to their employers as they were in former days, and the result is that they are becoming aware of the fact that Free Trade means benefit to the majority, while Protection means benefit to the minority of the people.

One of the arguments which is used against free trade with the United States is that, the manufacturers of that country would undersell those of Canada. But, sir, what does that mean? It means that the people would obtain the manufactured articles at a cheaper rate; that they would get more for their money, and that their wages would go further. Let me ask this question: How is a manufactory operated? By means of capital and labour; therefore if you can enable labour to obtain the necessaries of life at a cheaper rate you practically enable the capitalist to sell the manufactured articles at a cheaper rate and thus the consumption of those articles is increased, with the result that a further demand is created for capital and labour, in order to meet the increased consumption, and thus the manufacturing industries of a country are built up and increased.

But it may be argued that in such case the manufactories of Canada would be closed and that they would pass over to the States. That would be a most fallacious argument, because anyone who may take the trouble to study the question will find that, successful manufactories are the result of some local advantages which favour their creation, consequently whether there is free trade between Canada and the States or not, manufactories will grow on the soil which is congenial to them. Why sir, when I was in Eastern Canada, last summer, I met two or three Canadian manufacturers who assured me that they should like to see free trade between Canada and the United States as it would extend their market! They were quite ready to compete on fair terms with their cousins across the border; but they begged me on no account to mention their names, because they were Conservatives! Is it thus that private opinion is fettered and shackled by the despotism of party, no matter which side it may be on! I also, sir, am a Conservative, but I cannot consent to "give up to party that which is meant for mankind."

The favorite argument which is advanced against Free Trade between the two countries, is the question of the Tariff against Great Britain. There can be no doubt that if the Canadian Tariff were lower than that of the States, all British products intended for the States would enter by the back door of Canada; it, therefore, becomes necessary that in any negotiations on the subject with the States, a uniform Tariff should first be agreed upon as a basis for a Free Trade compact between the two countries. I cannot see why there should be any serious impediment to such an arrangement, for we must remember that, as it is, we have a Tariff against Great Britain and therefore all that would have to be done would be to come to such an agreement with the States that the uniform tariff could not be altered without the consent of the joint signatories to the agreement, or without the breaking up of the free trade compact. Such an agreement would probably prevent the recurrence of another "McKinley Bill" although I think that, in one sense, we have reason to be thankful for that bill, since I believe it will prove to be the lever which will hoist Free Trade with Great Britain upon the platform of practical politics.

We already hear a cry of retaliation going up from the people of England; that cry is likely to increase, and if a duty were placed upon the introduction of American goods into Great Britain it would mean the reduction of American trade to the amount of $450,000,000 (per annum), as that was the value of American goods imported into the United Kingdom last year. The result would be that the two countries would awake to the madness and folly which they were perpetrating, and they would join hands over a Free Trade policy, which would be the first step towards a Zollverein of the Anglo-Saxon speaking peoples of the world. Should that day arrive there will be a brilliant outlook for British Columbia trade.

But, sir, if we can bring about unrestricted reciprocity with the United States in our three natural resources—minerals, lumber and fish—which we possess in such abundance, we shall be laying the foundation of an immense trade in those articles, especially in minerals. We know that in the Kootenay and the Yale districts there have been discoveries of mineral leads showing enormous masses of argentiferous galena of comparatively low grades. By the customs tariff of the United States argentiferous galena is classed as a silver ore when the value of the silver is in excess of the value of the lead, and *vice versa*. The silver ore pays no duty, but the poorer lead ore pays a duty of $30 a ton, so that, even in the matter of ores, the rich benefit at the expense of the poor.

Now, sir, this duty upon lead ore practically closes the only good market we have for those ores. The margin of profit upon lead mining is so small that it cannot possibly stand a duty of $30 a ton. Many of our large galena leads lie within easy reach of the international boundary. Across that boundary there is a demand for such ores for fluxing and other purposes; but we cannot supply that demand on account of the prohibitive duty, and thus one of our most important industries becomes closed. When we turn to coal we find the same state of affairs. There is a duty of 75 cents a ton upon all coal entering the United States, except Anthracite, which goes in free. There is probably no country richer than British Columbia both in the quality and quantity of its coal. Immense masses of that coal lie within easy reach of the boundary, but so small is the margin of profit, that the duty of 75 cents per ton checks enterprise in that direction. The meaning of all this is that one or two mine owners and manufacturers in the States make large fortunes at the expense of the consumers, or in other words of the people, while some of the principle resources of British Columbia are shut up for an indefinite period. When we turn to our lumber industries and our fisheries we find that in the former a reduction has already been made on the import duty. Nevertheless the duties on both remains, which simply means the hampering of those industries for the benefit of the few at the expense of the many.

Now, sir, I cannot close my remarks on this subject without alluding to that ridiculous party shibboleth which has been put forth against any tendency towards free trade between Canada and the United States, on the plea that it would lead to annexation. Why, sir, the facts are exactly the reverse. If protection is maintained—if the natural resources of Canada are closed and shut off from a ready market—the people will begin to ask, "*cui bono?*" Why should they be debarred from a profitable trade which they might otherwise have—why should they become poor while their neighbors become rich, simply for the sake of an idea or sentiment? Then, no doubt, we shall hear a cry for annexation, for there will be some reason to justify it. The last census of the Dominion of Canada should be a warning as to what is in store, if the custums duties between Canada and the States be maintained. Take away those duties and there can no longer be any cause for annexation. Each side would have all that it wanted. The Americans certainly do not want Canada, and Canadians would not want to sacrifice their independence. I trust, sir, that I have shown cause why this House should pray the Dominion Government, through the proper channel, to endeavor to bring about unrestricted reciprocity with the States in minerals, in lumber and in fish, and thus to permit of the most important industries of British Columbia having a fair field for the enterprise of her people. (Applause.)

MR. BOOTH supported the resolution. He claimed that the manufacturers of the United States were running the Government of that country, and the manufacturers of Canada were doing the same in the Dominion. The result was a Government at Ottawa so corrupt that it brought the blush of shame to the face of every Canadian.

Some hon. members—No, no.

MR. BOOTH continued that recent disclosures at Ottawa had proven the Canadian Government to be the most corrupt in Her Majesty's broad Dominion, and this was due to the protective policy, which was simply robbing the many for the benefit of the few. He thought there was nothing in the cry that unrestricted reciprocity would lead to annexation. It would rather prevent annexation.

MR. HUNTER said that he had made up his mind always to speak at an early stage of the different debates in the House, for the reason that if he did not do so, the "big guns" would have the subject all battered to pieces before the rank and file get a chance (laughter). The resolution of the hon. member for Kootenay, had brought before the House the most important matter that could come before the House this session, for it involved the discussion of the whole fiscal policy of the Dominion of Canada (hear, hear). There were a good many platforms on this question of freer trade relations with the United States. There were those who claimed that there should be a restricted reciprocity in natural products, others wanted complete unrestricted reciprocity, otherwise known as Commercial Union; and there was still a smaller class, fortunately a small one, who desired annexation. For his part, he was convinced that free trade was not good for Canada. The present fiscal system was the best for Canada, and all attempts at modifying it, or repealing it, would certainly be defeated. The United States would not modify their policy in favor of Canada, except in the way of a prelude to annexation, for they had no reason to have any freer trade with us, unless it was as a bait to get hold of Canada. They wished to get Canada annexed if they wished anything at all, and would do nothing that would prevent this. He favored reciprocity in natural products, but would rigidly oppose reciprocity in manufactured articles, or, in other words, complete free trade. One fault he thought with Canadians, was that there was a certain inclination on their part to buy in foreign markets, even when they might get as good an article at home. He quoted statistics at some length to show the imports of Canada, and especially of British Columbia from the United States, and after explaining the bearing these had on the matter under discussion, he moved certain amendments, which were afterwards, by consent, incorporated in the original resolution. In conclusion, he said that he wished his amendment to carry, for the reason that he would have it distinctly understood that Canada was not cringing to the United States, and that the United States should know out and out, that no annexation was to be had. (Applause).

MR. CROFT agreed with Mr. Hunter's suggestions. In a brief speech he referred to the great riches of the natural resources of the province, which only needed capital to develop. Unfortunately, one of the most important of the industries of the province, the lumber trade, was at present in a very unsatisfactory condition, and he thought it would be a good plan for the Government to again grant a rebate of duty on lumber exported. He thought that, under free trade in natural products, the lumber trade would be considerably improved. The removal of the duty on fish would also be in the interest of this province, as then a large export trade to the Eastern states could be had during those seasons when, owing to the cold weather, no fish could be caught on the Atlantic Coast. These were but some of the reasons why reciprocity in natural products would be highly desirable.

MR. HALL said that he would oppose not only the original resolution, but also the amendment, because he did not think it was the duty of the Legislature of British Columbia to take the initiative in the matter. That would be something for the Dominion Government or even for the Imperial Government to take the initiative in, for they were the parties most interested. He was sure that with free trade Canada would be well able to hold her own in competition with the United States, but he did not think that Canada should adopt any policy that would result in a discrimination against the United States. He thought it was neither impossible nor unwise to hope for the time to come when all the English speaking people in the world should be drawn together on one common basis.

MR. SEMLIN said that the introduction of this motion by the honorable member for East Kootenay reminded him of children crying for the moon, for the United States would not change its fiscal system to benefit the Canadian people for, in everything relating to this country, the American people were shown by their press, by the utterances of their public men, and by their actions, to be hostile to Canada. He was of opinion that the only way Canada could get reciprocity in natural products with the United States was by becoming part and parcel of the great American republic to the south of us, and this he did not think they would ever consent to. So long as Canadians are loyal, they need expect no concessions from the United States. The protective system was the one adopted by the States and this policy had been eminently successful in their case at any rate, and it would be an unreasonable thing to ask them to reverse the whole system in our favor. He thought, too, that the protective policy had also been of great benefit to Canada. No province had profited by the National Policy as British Columbia had done, because that policy had enabled the Government to complete the Canadian Pacific railway. Referring for a moment to the corruption at Ottawa, he said, that unfortunately the corruption was on both sides, and not only on the part of the Government. Continuing, he said, he could see that the Americans would not be satisfied to give Canada any measure of reciprocity, either restricted or unrestricted, except at the price of having handed over to them the whole of our magnificent country. Another reason, he argued, why the motion should not pass, was that the Government of Canada had given the United States all the opportunity they wanted to enter into a reciprocal arrangement, and they (the United States) had, as yet, shown no desire to accept the proposition that had been on record since the National Policy was first adopted.

HON. MR. ROBSON's remarks were received with unstinted applause, from time to time, throughout. He complimented the hon. member for East Kootenay on his able speech in introducing the resolution, and said that he also felt bound to compliment nearly all the other members who had spoken, but would have to except the last two speakers. He had been very much surprised, indeed, to hear the hon. junior member for Yale (Mr. Semlin) say that the action of the House in passing such a resolution as the one proposed would put the members of the Assembly in the same category as the children crying for the moon. "Does the hon. gentleman know," he continued, "that there are now either on their way to, or in the city of Washington, three members of the Dominion Cabinet who are to discuss the question of reciprocity between Canada and the United States, and that, too, at the invitation of the United States? Does that look as if it is a ridiculous thing for us to express our opinion on this most important matter? No, no. I do not think it does, and I venture to say that this House will not think it does. I think the hon. gentleman was not well informed, nor did he consider what he was saying, or he would not have made such an unfortunate allusion." He differed, too, from the hon. member from Cassiar (Mr. Hall) in what that gentleman had said about this being no place for the initiation to be taken in the matter. He (Mr. Robson) thought this House had a perfect right to make its views known, and to ask the Dominion Government for what the people of the province wanted. He said the public happened to know that this was a question which was discussed, and discussed as a matter of great importance by both of the great political parties of the Dominion, by the party in power as well as by the party not in power, and the one out of power had away and beyond "outdone" the one in power by going very much further than the Government of the Dominion could see its way clear to go. It was right and just at this time for this province to express an opinion which would be calculated to help forward the negotiations, either now in progress or so soon to be taken up. It was true that British Columbia sent six members to Ottawa to represent the people, but these members could not now perhaps be heard as the House of Commons was not in session. And, in the meantime, it was quite right for the Legislature, which could be said to fully represent the people, to say just what they, the people of British Columbia, wanted. He thought it was a most extraordinary stand for any one to take to say that British Columbia should not express any opinion, because the Government of British Columbia had no power to negotiate a treaty. He thought on the contrary that this was, above all others, the most opportune time to make the wishes of the people known. Calling for the moon! We would indeed be in a most pitiable position if we could not speak at such a time, and if the mouths of the people of the Province were to be closed upon such an occasion, when a matter of such moment to the whole Dominion was being discussed, the sooner the connection the province had with the Dominion was sundered, the better. (Loud applause.) Yes, he said, better even that, than that when we ask for what we want, we should be placing ourselves in the position of children calling for the moon. With regard to the boodling talk of one of the hon. gentlemen who had taken part in the debate, he (Mr. Robson) was sorry that any mention of that matter had been made in this House at all. He thought it was bad enough that our dirty linen should be washed at Ottawa, without bringing any of it out to British Columbia. (Hear, hear.) The revelations at Ottawa had caused universal regret throughout the whole of the Dominion, and he thought that, under such circumstances, it was just as well not to say anything about the matter. While he supported heartily the resolution of the honorable member for East Kootenay, he took exception to some of the remarks that gentleman had made. He, (Mr. Robson), was of the opinion that unrestricted reciprocity, commercial union, or whatever else free trade with the United States might be called, would most certainly tend to the absorption of Canada by the United States. He was sorry he could take no other view of the matter; but his reading, his knowledge of the subject, and his best judgment compelled him to take the stand he did. The old axiom was that "trade follows the flag," but he believed that, in this case, that sentiment would be found to be a fallacious one, and that instead of trade following the flag, the old order would be reversed, and the flag would follow the trade. He was convinced that if all the customs barriers were removed from the boundary line between Canada and the United States, it would not be very long before the boundary line itself would be removed, and the United States would have completely gobbled up Canada, and the two peoples would become practically one. This was not only his feeling, but it was likewise the feeling and the earnest conviction of men far abler and more experienced in statesmanship, and was the direct result of the consensus of opinion, both in Canada and in Great Britain. So far as Free Trade was concerned, he would say that in the present condition of the two countries, Canada would be adopting simply a suicidal course in endeavoring to secure unrestricted reciprocity or Free Trade, for if such a policy should be adopted, the young manufacturing industries of the Dominion and of British Columbia in particular, would be to a very great extent crushed out of existence. One hon. member had ventured to say that Canada could compete with the United States. He could not have understood the matter or he would not have made such a statement. The fact was, that for every $100 invested in Canada in manufacturing industries, there was probably $1,000,000 invested in the United States, and the latter country could not now find even sufficient markets for its own manufactures, but was reaching far and wide for new territory and new markets wherein to sell. Absolute free trade with the United States would flood the Canadian markets with the surplus goods of the American factories, and would completely snow under our own industries. He (Mr. Robson) was firmly established in the belief that the true policy of Canada was to grow up a nation—a great nation—north of the other great nation upon the continent, and with a full measure of national spirit. It was in the true interests of both Canada and the United States that this should be the case, and more especially was it in the true interests of British Columbia. We had, he said, within our own borders all that was necessary to make a great nation, a greater nation than the United States. (Applause). And we had, moreover, behind us the power and the glory of the greatest nation the world had ever known. He contended that it was in the true interests of Canada that she should "hoe her own row," and with the backing of Great Britain we would ultimately be the greatest nation upon the continent (applause), and Canada could do it too (renewed applause) if her trade relations with the Mother Country were put on the basis on which they should be. He did not believe in unrestricted reciprocity, neither did he believe in Imperial Federation, but he did believe in freer trade relations with Great Britain. He thought it a most anomalous thing that Canada should meet the trade from and with the mother land in the same way that she meets the trade with the United States. He regarded Canada as an essential part of Great Britain, and thought that in course of time an arrangement would be made that would permit trade between this country and the mother land to be carried on without any barriers being in the way. The argument, he said, might be advanced against this that it would take away a good part of the revenue of Canada, but he thought it would be found to be in the true interests of Great Britain to make up any loss Canada might sustain in revenue by such arrangement. He regarded the colonies as the great field wherein the Mother Country should transplant her overflowing population. If Great Britain would guide her surplus population into Canada it would be a process that would create great strength for her as well as prevent pauperism at home, and while it would assist in raising a great nation in this country who would help to consume the surplus goods of England's manufactories (applause) by the influx of population to Canada from Great Britain, he contended, that a "Greater Britain" would soon be established in Canada, and the mother country itself would reap, along with Canada, the numerous advantages that would result. Referring to some of the arguments used in the debate, he said, that because free trade had made Great Britain a great nation, it did not follow necessarily that free trade would keep her great, and it might, as a matter of fact, be found that another policy, viz., that of freer trade with her colonies, would keep the mother land in the proud position she had now attained. And the day was not far distant when some such arrangement would be made, an arrangement, perhaps not on entirely the same lines, but approximate to the one he had referred to. He sincerely hoped the representatives of the people in the Legislative Assembly would think twice before expressing a careless opinion in favor of unrestricted reciprocity, for such a policy would be bad for British Columbia and bad for Canada. The Dominion and the province alike now occuppied a position of great advantage, and it was for the Canadian people as a whole to look forward like true, loyal Britons to the time when they should take their place amongst the nations of the world as one of the greatest of them all (loud and continued applause).

MR. FORSTER in a brief speech said he regarded protection in principle as a fraud. Members of Parliament sent to Ottawa by the manufacturers and monopolists would be sure to support the monopolists, on the same theory that a man elected on dishonest principles and in support of a dishonest policy, was likely to become a dishonest man. He believed in free trade, and thought British Columbia would only prosper when she had obtained free trade. He did not think unrestricted reciprocity would lead to annexation.

HON. MR. TURNER said that he thought nearly every member of the House was in favor of the principle of the resolution that was being debated, but, unfortunately, the discussion had drifted into other channels, and was made an excuse by some hon. members for talking free trade. Free trade with the United States would put a good many of the men now advocating it in an anomalous position, for they were advocating free trade with a nation that would give them the highest tariff of any nation in the world. The United States would not, he said, accept a policy of unrestricted reciprocity with Canada, unless they imposed such conditions as would be pre-eminently in favor of themselves. If Canada were to have free trade with the United States, unless this country adopted the United States tariff, it would simply mean that that country would be flooded with goods from all over the world, sent across the line through Canada, and that would mean that the Canadian merchants would be doing the trade of the United States, a proposition which the American people were not at all likely to entertain. The United States would, he believed, entertain a proposition for restricted reciprocity, for they had once done so; and, while the old treaty was in force, Canada had done well, and the arrangement was found to be eminently suitable. The question was, however, a most complex one. There were seven provinces to be considered—all of them having different and diversified interests. He did not think any arrangement could be made until such time as delegates would meet from all the provinces to discuss the whole matter thoroughly. It was, however, a safe statement to make, that if Canada went in for Free Trade with the United States, the adoption of such a policy would shut out Great Britain, and this was something that no Canadian desired. In conclusion, he said there was one thing that surprised him; it was that the loudest advocates of Free Trade in everything, always stopped at Free Trade in labor. He could not understand why a free trader in everything else, should draw the line at free trade in labor. On this particular question, all the so-called free traders were very careful how far they went. (Applause).

MR. SWORD said he wished to put himself on record as being opposed to the motion. He wanted full free trade and not a partial reciprocity. He thought that Canada meant more than Canada for the manufacturers, and that the consumers should be likewise considered.

DR. MILNE spoke at considerable length, taking up the question of the negotiations between Canada and the United States when the last Dominion House of Commons was dissolved, and reading copious extracts from the campaign literature of that time to show that neither Republicans nor Democrats wanted any freer trade relations with Canada. He would vote for the resolution, however, but did not think it went far enough. Canada, and especially British Columbia, was suffering from the effects of the present fiscal policy of the Dominion Government and he hoped the day would come when a full measure of free trade would be had.

MR. KELLIE said he would vote for the resolution in the hope that it would do some good, but he was afraid the United States would not accept a limited or restricted reciprocity which would not do them any good.

COL. BAKER closed the debate. He argued that there seemed to be an almost unanimous consent to the principles embodied in the resolution but the free traders had lost sight of the principles in dealing with the difficulties. He thought that the principle at any rate should be agreed on, and even if there were difficulties of detail, they could afterwards be arranged.

The resolution was carried without a division.

COUNTY COURT ACT.

MR. BROWN introduced a bill to amend the County Court Act. Bill read a first time; second reading, next sitting of the House.

ESQUIMALT WATERWORKS COMPANY.

MR. EBERTS introduced a bill to amend the Esquimalt Waterworks Act. Bill read a first time; second reading, next sitting of the House.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

MR. MACKENZIE drew the attention of the Government to the effect that a return asked for during the session of 1891 had not been brought down.

HON. MR. VERNON said the order must have been overlooked. He would see that it was attended to.

THE COMPANIES' ACT.

On the motion to adopt the report of the Committee of the Whole on the Companies' Act,

MR. BROWN moved to amend the bill so as to permit trustees or directors of a joint stock company to reside outside the province.

After a discussion between Hon. Mr. Davie and Hon. Mr. Beaven on the legal points, the amendment was adopted. The report of the committee was then adopted, and the bill was read a second time.

SALE OF GOODS AND CHATTELS.

HON. MR. DAVIE introduced a bill to regulate the sale of goods and chattels. Bill read a first time, second reading next session of the House.

MOTIONS.

MR. KELLIE moved, seconded by Mr. Brown, "That a respectful address be presented to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, praying him to cause to be sent down to this House copies of all Orders-in-Council and correspondence between the Government, or any member thereof, and any person or persons, relative to the reserve placed on certain lands at or near Slocan lake, or to the refusal of the application of any person or persons to take up land at or near Slocan lake, or to the allowance of any such application." Carried.

MR. KELLIE moved, seconded by MR. SWORD, "That a respectful address be presented to his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, requesting him to cause to be placed before this House copies of all correspondence, Orders in Council or other papers that have passed between any department of the Government and Mr. James McCauley, relative to an application for a homestead on the Columbia river, at a point now known as the townsite of Farwell." Carried.

INCORPORATION OF COMPANIES.

MR. KELLIE introduced a bill relating to the incorporation of railway, tramway, telephone and telegraph companies. Read a first time, second reading, next sitting of the House.

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT ACT.

The report of the committee of the whole upon the Constitution Amendment bill was adopted and the bill was read a second time.

QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS.

MR. KELLIE asked the Chief Commissioners of Land and Works the following questions, to which these answers were given:

Were Messrs. G. M. Sproat and A. S. Farwell, or either of them, in the employ of the Provincial Government at any time in the year 1883, 1884, or 1885, in Kootenay district? Ans.—Yes. Mr. Farwell was employed to examine and report upon the submerged lands situated between the International boundary and Kootenay lake and upon Indian requirements in the locality. Mr. Sproat was employed to examine and report upon Kootenay district generally and upon the Ainsworth and Grohman schemes in particular, and also respecting the Indian population and requirements.

2. For what length of time were they employed? A.—Mr. Farwell was employed in Kootenay from July 14th to November 3, 1883, and W. Sproat from July 12, 1883, to February 7, 1884.

3. What salary did they receive? A.—Each gentleman received $150 per month.

The House adjourned at 5:30 p. m.

NEWS OF THE PROVINCE.

The Telegram to Enter the Morning Field—Mr. Wilmot at Westminster.

VANCOUVER.

VANCOUVER, Feb. 9.—Engineer Thompson, of the steamer Senator, was badly scalded, this morning. He took hold of the steam chest without turning off the steam. His body was parboiled from the shoulder on the right side down. He may live.

In the police court, Louis Mohr was committed to stand his trial, this morning.

Large quantities of stolen goods have been identified as from J. Calderwood's store, which was burglarized, last night. Experienced crooks secured merchandise to the value of about $25.

H. Darling, who went down to Victoria on the s s. Capilano, says she made the trip in ten hours, and her machinery worked splendidly.

A close investigation into the cause of yesterday's fire is demanded.

The sheriff, to-day, sold what the fire had left of the St. Charles hotel furniture for $45.

A gentleman made some purchases from the Chinese on the Empress on Sunday. When he came ashore they were confiscated by the customs officers.

The Free Masons intend to hold an assembly and luncheon party on the evening of February 24th. It has been decided to hold it at the Hotel Vancouver.

VANCOUVER, Feb. 10.—S.S. Empress of Japan leaves on Sunday. Dr. Ferguson takes Dr. Gordon's place on her.

There are six hundred appeals in the Court of Revision.

Wesham College is now being run on a new basis. It will be an entirely philanthropic institute. The trustees, Messrs. D. Oppenheimer, J. C. Keith and H. J. Cambie, have given notice that they will apply for incorporation. The staff of teachers will be five. The number of boys in attendance has doubled since the change of government.

Fifty dwelling houses are being erected throughout the city.

The stump, "Princess Louise," near the British Columbia Iron Works, has been obliterated with dynamite. It was a well-known land mark, and the remains of one of the largest trees in this district. It was 15 feet through.

The Telegram has given orders for a three-story building at the corner of Pender and Richard streets. It will be of brick and stone, the side entrance being on Richard street, and the front on Pender street, near the Bank of British Columbia. The Telegram is to come out as a morning paper; $40,000 stock has been subscribed.

WESTMINSTER.

NEW WESTMINSTER, Feb. 9.—A director of the Woollen Mills company told a correspondent, to-day, that every arragement had been made for the removal of the plant to Victoria. F. G. Strickland is now in the capital working up a scheme on behalf of the company, and is meeting with much success. It is understood that some of the most influential [illegible] of Victoria are to take stock in the [illegible]y, which will have a capital of [illegible] the mill, when erected, will have [illegible] the capacity of the present [illegible] The question of site is [illegible] to be settled, but it is expected [illegible] will be decided on this [illegible] company have already booked [illegible] the goods they can turn out [illegible] channels, etc.

The [illegible] new election in Ward Three has [illegible] issued by Judge Bole. The nominations will take place on Wednesday, 24th instant, and the polling, if any, on March 2nd.

Messrs. Spillsbury and Annandale leave for Nanaimo to-morrow to represent the Westminster Association Football Club at a union meeting in that city on Thursday.

A letter from Osoyoos says the snow has disappeaaed from the valley and the weather is getting warm. There is every prospect of a very early spring. Cattle were never in better condition at this season of the year.

NEW WESTMINSTER, Feb. 10.—S. Wilmot, superintendent of fish culture, arrived today from Ottawa. He doesn't know the exact date when the royal commission to examine into the Fraser river fisheries will begin work. It will rest with Speaker Higgins when the commissioners meet.

E. Burns and D. S. Curtis will begin the erection of a new block on Columbia street in two weeks, which will cost $50,000.

Brown, Nelson & Co., pork packers, of Brantford, Ontario, have removed their establishment to this city, and commenced business to-day.

The following team to represent Westminster against Victoria, in the match at the capital, on Saturday next, was selected: Goal, S. Peele; backs, Allison and Allandale; half-backs, Clapcott, J. H. Field and Smith; forwards, A. W. Spillsbury, Matins, R. W. Spillsbury, Springer, and Wilkie. The team will leave by the steamer Princess Louise, on Saturday morning.

Judge Bole has made an order declaring Tilman W. Herring and Annie Mary Jaques, Sir John Franklin Herring, and Henry Holbrook Herring the only heirs of the late S. W. Herring, and as such entitled to the issue of a Crown grant in their favor of certain lands opposite New Westminster. Mrs. Herring; the widow, having executed a quit claim deed of her interest therein. The land is worth over $100,000.

NANAIMO.

NANAIMO, Feb. 9.—With the proposed amalgamation of the Union and Nanaimo brewery companies, the shareholders are of the opinion that they will be able to control the whole of the business in Nanaimo. They will also be in a better position to brew for exportation, especially lager beer. A meeting of shareholders of the two companies will shortly be held.

Messrs. J. Beeson, T. Coe, E. Ascot, G. Goodman and J. Black, started, on Saturday morning, to go to the Nanaimo lakes on a hunting tour, taking two pack ponies with them. When they got to the spur of Mount Benson, near Boulder creek, they met with five feet of soft snow. It was continuous, and the horses became so exhausted that they fell down. A retreat was made, and the party, except J. Black, went around by the Nanaimo River road. They saw a couple of deer, and any amount of wolves' tracks. It was pretty cold on the spar of the mountain. The Nanaimo river route was blocked with snow.

On the occasion of the dedication of the ground upon which the new Salvation Army Barracks is to be built, Commissioner Rees stated that it was the first piece of ground that had ever been dedicated by the Salvation Army in British Columbia.

The Rugby Football Club has been reorganized, and has now a formidable team to put in the field. Arrangements are being entered into for a match with the Victoria boys, and probably the first match will take place in this city.

NANAIMO, Feb. 10.—The eighteenth annual session of the Grand Lodge I.O.O.F., opened in this city at 2 p.m. Some representatives arrived yesterday, but the majority arrived this morning. The afternoon session was devoted to the introduction of members and the receipt of reports of the officers of the past year.

Thomas Clark, bricklayer, who was reported robbed of a gold watch and chain by three Siwashes, a few weeks ago is wanted. When the court opened this morning, Clark was not to be found, the court adjourned till 2 p.m., still Clark the informant could not be found. A bench warrant was issued for his arrest.

Arrived, ship Glory of the Seas. Sailed, S.S. Wellington and ship Tacoma.

MARINE MOVEMENTS.

ALONG THE WATER FRONT, FEB. 9.

A Valparaiso dispatch, of this date, reads as follows: "Capt. Sledge, of the British bark Vale of Nith, which has just arrived here, reports that on February 3rd he sighted the bark Lizzie Bell, Capt. Edwards, 90 miles north-east of this port flying signals of distress. The Bell was bound for Victoria, B.C., with a cargo of powder and war material for the British Government. She had been on fire under the cabin since December 19th. The clothing of the crew had been burned and chronometers destroyed. Captain Edwards was stricken with paralysis, the mate was ill and the second mate was in charge of the vessel. The vessel is now making for Coquimbo to discharge on the British steamship Liffy."

The Bell was built in Sunderland in 1877 by R. Thompson, jr., and is owned by P. Iredale & Son, of Liverpool. She is described in Lloyd's, which rates her 100 A1, as an iron bark 1,036 tons register, 214.4 feet long, 34.4 feet beam, and 21.3 feet deep. Capt. McEdwards was commanding when the Bell left London, on September 28th, last year, for Victoria, B. C., and Esquimalt. She was last spoken on November 17th, in lat. 10, S., long. 32, W., when all was well with the ship, though the captain was unwell. The bark was consigned to R. P. Rithet & Co., Ltd., of this city, and, besides bringing a quantity of powder and stores for the naval storekeeper had a large general cargo for Victorians included in which was 300 tons of rails for the N. E. T. & L. Co. to continue the work of extension in James Bay ward. All the Victoria cargo is insured, but its non arrival will cause considerable delay in the prosecution of street railway extensions. The present is the Bell's first voyage to Victoria; her consignees have no knowledge of her perilous position further than as contained in the news dispatch.

GIGANTIC COAL COMBINE.

The Entire Anthracite Interest Controlled by one Railroad.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 10.—The rumors regarding the great Anthracite coal deal which have been flying around for some days, assumed definite shape, this morning when it was authoritatively announced that a combination embracing the Reading, Lehigh Valley, Lackawanna and Delaware and Hudson has been formed. The details were not given; but it is learned from an official source that the papers have been signed and that nothing now remained to be done. The Reading has leased the Lehigh Valley and the Jersey Central railroads on a seven per cent, basis, and has brought the Lackawanna and the Delaware and Hudson into the combination. The latter roads enter into contract with the Reading whereby the entire anthracite coal business of the country is controlled by one road. It is understood that the Reading will have representation on the Lackawanna and Delaware and Hudson roads, and that the entire anthracite coal business of the United States will be brought under one head. The Reading officials in this city will not confirm the above, and it is thought that the information was received from New York.

Terrible Weather in the Atlantic.

LONDON, Feb. 10.—The British steamer Brocadaile, which sailed from Cardiff on January 14, was towed into Pylmouth today by the British steamship Parkmont which left Boston January 28th for London. A fierce gale struck the Bracodaile in mid ocean breaking her shaft. The Dutch steamer Edam took her in tow on Feb. 4th. A gale was raging at the time, and the hawser connecting the two steamers broke, the rope in its rebound striking the boatswain and killing him instantly.