The Colonist.

THURSDAY, MAY 4, 1899.

VICTORIA AS A DISTRIBUTING POINT.

One of the strong arguments in favor of a direct railway service from Victoria to the Mainland is that it will promote the interests of this city as a distributing point. The growth and progress of Southern British Columbia are steady and rapid, making the present no test for the future internal commerce that will be carried on. The competition of Eastern wholesalers must always be reckoned on, to a greater or less extent, but Victoria's merchants have already demonstrated their ability to hold their own with them, notwithstanding the handicap of an interrupted means of communication. To maintain the position which the city has gained and to increase its hold upon the trade of the interior at least in proportion to the increase of that trade, it is necessary to have better communication with the Mainland than can be afforded by such steamers as now, or as have at any time been in use here. What Victoria merchants require is a train at their door, which will convey their goods without change of cars to any part of the Province reached by rail.

Without desiring to detract in the least from any other scheme that has been or may be proposed, it may be fairly claimed that the interests of the city as a distributing point will be better served by a connection with Vancouver than in any other way. Some people contend that the best plan would be to build to some point outside of Vancouver, say at English Bluff, and there provide connection with the Canadian Pacific, the Great Northern and the Northern Pacific. This looks attractive, but we submit that it is not a business proposal. Men are not going to put money into the maintenance of a ferry service, even if it were given to them for nothing, that does not connect with anything. They will seek such a terminal as is in a position already to give business. Moreover, there is no reason to suppose that Vancouver will not furnish all the connection with the continental railways that can be looked for at any other point on the British seaboard. The Canadian Pacific must be recognized as the chief factor in transportation in Southern British Columbia, and the effort of the people of Victoria ought to be to establish such connection with that line as will make this city its actual terminus. When other transcontinental railways seek to utilize such a connection doubtless there will readily be found a means of giving it to them. We must connect with some railway, no matter where the proposed ferry terminates.

The benefits likely to accrue to Victoria from having its facilities as a distributing point improved are more immediate than those which will follow from placing it in the forefront as a competing terminal point for ocean commerce, and being more immediate they appeal to business men more directly. They will not be nearly so important, in the long run, but even with respect to the latter, there is no comparison between a connection with the Canadian railway system and any other that can be suggested.

In view of the growing trade of the North such a connection will be of the greatest value. It will place the city upon precisely the same footing as Vancouver. In the matter of freight and passenger rates from the East, it is so situated now, but the break necessary for a transfer from a train to the steamer is a handicap, which everyone recognizes. This will be wholly removed when the train, instead of stopping at Vancouver, continues on its course across the Gulf and thence on to Victoria. Our city will then be both the terminus of the transcontinental railway and the starting point of the Northern steamship service, which will be a matter of material advantage in securing business. When we secure railway extension to the north end of the island this advantage will be even greater.

IT IS PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Mr. Joseph Martin, Attorney-General of British Columbia, has been good enough to inform Colonist readers that it is none of their business whether he continues to act as Mr. Ludgate's counsel in the Deadman's Island affair, or if he intends to resign his position as Attorney-General. He makes this statement with characteristic profanity. Mr. Martin's replies were given to a Colonist reporter, but he knew perfectly well that the reporter did not ask out of curiosity, and that the information was sought for that portion of the public which reads the Colonist. We submit that the matters referred to are very much the business of the Colonist and the Colonist readers. Mr. Martin is their hired man. He is paid a certain salary to attend to the public business in the capacity of chief advisor of the Lieutenant Governor, and the readers of the Colonist are among his paymasters.

Owing to action taken by the Government, of which Mr. Martin is a member, a question has arisen between that government and Mr. Martin's private client, Mr. Ludgate. It is very natural that the public should desire to know if he proposes to oppose the claim which his colleagues have advanced on behalf of the province. We have made it as sufficiently plain that we make no exception to an attorney-general accepting a retainer from a private client on private business. The tenure of office in Canada is not so secure that a lawyer ought to be asked to surrender his private client entage when accepting a portfolio. But the case of Mr. Ludgate is not a private one. It is not a case between private citizens, in which there could be no reason to suppose the province would be concerned. On the contrary, it is a case in which the Federal Government and a provincial municipality were concerned on the very face of facts. It was a case where there was almost certain from the very outset to be a conflict, which might call for the intervention of the Crown officers of this province. A half hour's investigation would have shown Mr. Martin that the province had a possible interest in the island. Under such circumstances his acceptance of a retainer from Mr. Ludgate cannot be justified by the most lenient view of official responsibility.

Surely under such conditions the public has a right to be informed of Mr. Martin's intentions. Surely the province has a right to know if its attorney-general proposes to resist its claims as he has resisted the claims of the city of Vancouver. Surely it is right for the public to be informed if their attorney-general, having incapacitated himself from acting for the province, proposes to continue to hold office. Yet Mr. Martin refuses the information, and refuses it in a profane and vulgar manner.

The language employed by Mr. Martin is an additional illustration of his utter unfitness for official position of any kind. For a public official to give such a reply to a public journal on a public question is to write himself down a ruffian. It is in perfect keeping with his attack upon Mr. Price Ellison last winter, and shows him to be unfit for intercourse with gentlemen, although we regret to say that this is no late discovery.

TRADE WITH BRITAIN.

Mr. Clive Phillipps-Wolley in his letter reprinted to-day sets out in full a resolution introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. McNeil, and enlarges upon it as an important plank in the Conservative platform. The subject matter of the resolution is of very great interest. It is somewhat extraordinary that Sir Wilfrid Laurier omitted to take advantage of the notable trend of opinion in Great Britain in the direction mentioned in Mr. McNeil's resolution. He seems, indeed, to have been rather more concerned in doing a little spectacular work in connection with the Jubilee than in advancing the commercial interest of either Canada or the Mother Country. He gave the Empire a phrase and got in exchange a knighthood.

If it is possible to present a preferential trade arrangement between the Mother Country and the Colonies as a definite scheme, it will attract the people of Canada as nothing else will. No party opposing it could carry a single constituency. While it is self-evident that any such line of policy can only be successful through the co-operation of the British government, it will undoubtedly be a wise and popular move for the Conservative party to identify itself with it at the outset, and to hold the Liberals responsible for their failure to take advantage of the set of opinion in that direction in England.

PASSING COMMENT.

Nelson was never more hopeful than to-day, remarks the Miner of that city. And why not, may we ask? Is not Nelson a fine business and mining centre?

The Revelstoke Herald says that many Americans are moving into Alberta, being attracted by its genial climate. If climate is an object, these immigrants might come further and do better.

The Kootenay Mail hopes that the C. P. R. will get in at once and "prepare to buck" the American smelter trust that is reaching out to control all the mines of the continent. So say we all of us.

The Portland Telegram draws attention to the fact that the United States has been at war for nearly a year. This is one of the longest of modern wars, although it is true that it has not been with one country continuously.

The Globe sympathizes with James Bay bridge because the latter has to undergo another inspection. The much inspected structure in the opinion of the last city council had already outlived its usefulness and safety, but in the opinion of the present one seems to have "achieved a blessed and glorious immortality."

Prosperity in a thousand forms is here, remarks the Montreal Star, referring to the general condition of Canada. This is happily quite true. The country is in a condition of prosperity, and its enjoyment of such an excellent condition of things is due to causes which fortunately the mixers and muddlers of politics cannot materially interfere with.

The Rossland Miner looks for a real estate boom, and as a starter in that direction incidentally mentions that the population of the city will be 18,000 within two years. That means very rapid growth, even for a British Columbia mining town; but the possibilities of Rossland are great. They will not be lessened by the defeat of the Miner's efforts to secure the construction of railways that will draw the trade of Kootenay to United States cities and carry ore to United States smelters.

The Times endeavors to defend the federal government from the strong arraignment of Senator Macdonald by claiming that they have had such a tremendous amount of detail to look after that they could not really find time to do justice to British Columbia. This is an odd excuse, but it has the advantage of being a very elastic one. It can be made to stretch out to cover all eternity. According to the Times, British Columbia may look for decent treatment when the government gets through with the details of administration. This will only be when they go out of office. Perhaps this is what our contemporary means. If so, we will not dispute the proposition.

CONNECTION WITH THE MAINLAND.

It is understood that a proposition has been made by the E. & N. Railway Company to the Committee of Fifty to provide connection with the Mainland by way of Vancouver. It will, we presume, be submitted to the committee at its Friday session. Our understanding of the matter is that the proposal is made at this particular time because of a request from the committee, but we know that the company has had the matter under consideration for quite a long while.

The terms of the offer have not yet been given to the public and probably will not be before being laid under the notice of the committee. We are given to understand in a general way that it contemplates substantial assistance from the city and a twice-a-day service between Victoria and Vancouver, the time each way to be not exceeding three and a half hours. There are also, we understand, some provisions as to terminals.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that a perfectly responsible company is ready to undertake this important project. Whether the terms to which the city will be asked to assent will appear reasonable to the citizens we can form no idea until the details of the offer are before us. Several things must be considered. The first cost is not all by any means. The present steamer service with Vancouver is no doubt profitable, but no one has ever thought it was a bonanza. A service which will reduce the time fifty per cent. will necessarily be more expensive even if only one trip a day is provided for. Business will undoubtedly increase, but we imagine that for a time the ferry would be operated at a loss. This fact must be taken into account as well as the original cost of the ferry and the terminals at Vancouver, on the Island and in Victoria. We do not think it necessary to say anything as to the advisability of the connection just now, further than has been said in the last two issues of this paper. There are more things to be said, but they will keep until the concrete proposal is before the people. At present we shall only say that the time has come when the people of Victoria can get the much desired ferry connection with the Canadian Pacific, and it will be their own fault if they do not secure it.

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S CLAIMS.

The people of this province would have felt better pleased if Senator Mills, who is the spokesman of the government in the Senate, had treated the question of Senator Macdonald in regard to public expenditures in this province in a less cavalier spirit. All he seemed to have to say was that he really did not know much about the matter, to which he added a little badinage about Senator Macdonald's attitude towards the government. We readily acquit Senator Mills of any intention to mislead, when he said that he was not aware that such a condition existed as Senator Macdonald referred to. We have a higher appreciation of his sense of justice than that, for surely no one, who really knew how matters stand would hesitate for a moment in endorsing the latter. If any one replies that Senator Templeman did not, we have only to say that Senator Templeman has yet to disclose that he recognizes any obligation on his part to keep informed of the treatment which the province is receiving or to champion its claims. He has hardly ceased wondering how he ever came to be made a senator. He was present during the discussion, for it appears by the official report that when Sir Mackenzie Bowell spoke of the value cabinet representation would be to British Columbia, the Senator from Broad street remarked: "They would raise the standard of the government." Owing to the strict impartiality of the Senate reporter and the omission of the Queen's Printer to use italics or other means of conveying an impression of the spirit in which remarks are made, we are left to guess whether Senator Templeman was speaking sarcastically, humorously, or with that seriousness of manner which would be expected from one in his station while considering a matter of such grave importance to the province. The Senator from Broad street is quite consistent in ignoring the matter now. He ignored it persistently in his newspaper, indeed went so far on one occasion as to express a hope that the demand for fair play would fail. The thanks of the people of the province are due to Senator Macdonald for his action, which we trust will be followed up by similar steps by our representatives in the Commons.

Rhodes says he is going on with his Cape-Cairo railway. What Rhodes says generally goes.

APT QUOTATIONS.

Proverbs, axioms and wise sayings have been uttered by Confucius and other wise men from time immemorial, but few people realize how many there are of them. C. I. Hood & Co., of Sarsaparilla fame, have over 2,000, and they have originated the ingenious plan of serving them up in delectable shape in thousands of newspapers, with each one neatly turning a point as to the merit of their well-known medicine. The extensive use of these proverbs is original and creditable to Hood & Co.

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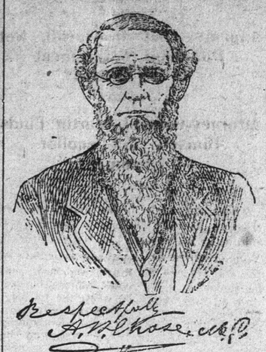

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MR. LUDGATE'S ATTORNEY.

Mr. Ludgate has come to the rescue of Mr. Attorney-General Martin by informing the Colonist that the latter never received any retainer from him, and was acting only in a sort of semi-something capacity. We accept Mr. Ludgate's explanation and congratulate the Attorney-General upon having so ingenious a—well we were going to say client, but suppose we must say friend. Mr. Ludgate has placed Mr. Martin in a new light. For some weeks the newspapers of all shades of politics have united in a dire plot to represent Mr. Martin as Mr. Ludgate's retained counsel. So far as any one can judge, Mr. Martin would have been content to have been so considered until the end of the chapter, but a little change in the game makes it inconvenient for this relation to continue, and so the public is informed that if Mr. Martin was Mr. Ludgate's counsel, he was not a retained counsel. We repeat that for Mr. Martin to lend his unquestioned legal talents to Mr. Ludgate or any one else out of motives of pure philanthropy is at least novel. We are also surprised that Mr. Martin did not think of this day before yesterday.

Mr. Ludgate now comes before the provincial government asking for a lease. No doubt the public will feel that their interests are quite safe in Mr. Martin's hands, since that gentleman is not Mr. Ludgate's retained counsel, but only a sort of amicus curiae. If there are some people who think that Mr. Ludgate's explanation does not help Mr. Martin's position in the least, Mr. Martin will doubtless attribute it to their inability to perceive the fine distinction between an unretained counsel and one who has actually pocketed the fee.

THE ESTIMATES.

The Estimates for the year ending June 30, 1900, amount to $46,286,550.77, a decrease of $1,613,936.41. Of the total $4,698,900 are "chargeable to capital," and include the usual annual contribution to the redemption of debt, an outlay of $386,000 on account of the militia, $3,735,900 on account of railways and canals, $367,000 on account of public works, and $150,000 on account of Dominion lands. This makes the amount chargeable to income $41,528,298.46, a decrease of $563,658.74 from the current year. As supplementary estimates are to be brought down, these figures do not convey any definite idea of the comparison between the expenditure for the two years.

The interest account shows an increase of $356,428.55, due chiefly to the increase of the interest on Savings Bank deposits from 2½ to 3 per cent. A decrease of $500,000 in the amount on deposit in the savings banks is expected. The whole public debt calls for an outlay of $13,313,889.91, not including $161,243.80 for charges on management.

Civil government calls for $1,451,475.66, an increase of $19,484.17 over the current year. The amount is made up of numerous small items. In this connection it is interesting to note that the High Commissioner in London gets a salary of $10,000 a year and a like amount for his office expenses.

The administration of justice calls for $93,755, which is nearly $10,000 less than the amount voted last year.

Dominion Police call for $23,000, which is the same as last year; and penitentiaries for $416,600, or $900 less than this year. The New Westminster institution gets $2,000 more, to be expended in connection with "industries."

The amount put down for expenses of legislation is $369,675.50, which is $249,954.14 less than for the current year; Arts, Agriculture and Statistics are down for $310,100, which is $32,100 less than for this year; Quarantine calls for $129,000, or $10,000 more than this year, the difference being for additional compensation for the slaughter of pigs and sheep. Immigration is to get $358,500, or $100,000 more than this year, the increase being general.

Pensions require $545.88 less than this year, or $26,989.84. There is no change in the pension list of Quebec, Ontario or Manitoba; the Nova Scotia list is reduced $2,666.66 by the death of ex-Judge MacDonald; the New Brunswick list is decreased $3,333.34 by the death of ex-Chief Justice Sir John Allen, which decrease is partly offset by a pension of $1,600 to ex-Judge Steadman of the county court. British Columbia's list is cut down $1,622.16 by the death of ex-Judge Spalding. It may interest some readers to know that Capt. P. H. Hankin, late colonial secretary of this province, figures in the list for $2,595.56, and Sir George Phillippo, a former attorney-general, for $584. No pensions seem to be paid to any one in Prince Edward Island.

The Militia calls for $1,706,720, or an increase of $386,104. Of this amount $109,000 is to be expended upon the Esquimalt defences, or $32,500 more than during the current year. Annual drill calls for $400,000 next year, as against $300,000 this year; in fact, nearly every item shows an increase. There were appropriations to the amount of $198,341.28 made for this year, to which there is nothing corresponding for next year.

Railways and Canals are down for $3,795,900, which will be charged to capital, and $291,424.66, which will be charged to income. Much the greater part of this is for canals, the largest single item being of $845,000 on account of the construction of the Trent canal. The Intercolonial calls for $941,000, nearly half of it being for increased accommodation at St. John, and $343,000 being for rolling stock. The expenditure on capital account by this department is $2,272,782, less than for the current year.

Public works chargeable to capital will absorb $367,000, being on account of the River St. Lawrence ship canal and the improvement of the Kaministiqua river. The expenditure on this service chargeable to income is $2,302,575. Of this British Columbia gets $63,775 for public works, made up as follows: General repairs on public buildings, $5,000; Kamloops post office, $3,000; Vancouver drill hall, $22,000 and a re-vote of $12,000; Victoria post office, $10,775 with a re-vote of $8,000; William Head quarantine, $3,000. The amount to be expended in this province on rivers and harbors is $87,000, an increase of $4,500 over this year. The items are: Columbia, above Golden, $4,000; Narrows between the Arrow Lakes, $25,000; Columbia river, removing rocks above Revelstoke, $3,000; improvement of Duncan river, $3,000; ship channel of the Fraser, $25,000; general repairs, $3,000; Kootenay river, below Fort Steele, $5,000; Nanaimo harbor, $10,000; Skeena river, $5,000 and a re-vote of $3,500; wharf at William Head, $4,000. There is $15,000 down for dredging in this province, $1,000 for the Alberni telegraph line, and $3,000 for the line to Nicola.

Mail subsidies call for $426,666.66, which is $11,000 less than this year's appropriation. Of this $5,000 is for the steamers to San Francisco, a grant as old as confederation.

Ocean and River Service calls for $181,300, none of which is specifically down for this province. The lighthouse and coast service claims $516,810, which is not given in detail except as regards salaries. We note an increase of $100 for Capt. Gaudin.

The appropriation asked for Indian Affairs is $980,217.50, of which $124,710 comes to this province. The Northwest mounted police require $353,750, and the government of the territories, not including Yukon, $357,859. The administration of the Yukon is down for $810,500. For the collection of customs $999,090 are asked, and for excise $462,095.

The large sum of $4,740,100 is down for railways and canals and is made chargeable to revenue; for public works, $174,450 chargeable to revenue, and for the post office $3,604,843, also chargeable to revenue. The latter is a small increase. There are some minor divisions of the public service omitted in the above summary, but they have no special or local interest.

PASSING COMMENT.

The Westminster Sun makes the dire suggestion that some women are at the bottom of the Deadman's island muddle. We shudder at the thought, for if it is true, when will the last word be spoken?

The Toronto Globe says that there are fully 40,000 bicycles in more or less daily use in that city. We suppose "more or less daily" is intended as a concession to the good folk who think the wheel an ungodly vehicle and therefore not proper to be used on Sunday.

The Province is informed that the Colonist has not the least intention of interfering in the Deadman's island squabble now that it has brought out the fact that the island belongs to the province. It proposes to leave the whole matter to be adjusted by the people of Vancouver and the government.

The Manitoba Free Press thinks the government ought to find a means of reducing the cabinet, or more accurately should aim at a reduction in order to fulfill the the pledges of the Liberal party. There are some pledges that are more honored in the breach than the observance and this is one of them. The cabinet is none too large.

The Montreal Star and some other Eastern papers are having a lot of sport with Mr. Fred Peters, of this city, over his flying trip to the Prince Edward Island legislature. We assume that Mr. Peters had good and sufficient reasons for occupying his seat this year. He certainly could not have influenced by financial consideration, as the Star suggests, and it hardly could have been a piece of political plotting, else Sir Hibbert Tupper would not have been a party to the arrangement. We fear our contemporaries are growing sensational.

The British Columbia Southern Railway Company, which seeks for authority to construct a line between Golden and the boundary line along the western slope of the Rocky Mountains, is likely to secure its charter. Presumably it will be in the field for a subsidy.

Mr. Martin was more communicative in Vancouver that here. Possibly he had time to think over his bad manners and decided that he had blundered. He says that the idea of his risigning is all nonsense. This does not surprise us in the least. The Colonist never intimated that Mr. Martin would resign. It only said that he ought to do so. His retention of office under the circumstances shows that neither he nor his colleagues understand what is due to public sentiment. Fancy a British cabinet minister holding office under similar circumstances. But then one cannot fancy a gentleman like Mr. Martin holding a cabinet office in Britain.

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