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The Choice of Victoria.

Mr. Turner and His Colleagues Have a Splendid Reception at a Great Meeting.

They Stand for Straightforward Government Against Imported Political Tricks.

A Legislature Packed to Deprive This District of the Influence It Should Possess.

Mr. Martin's Sneer at the British Pacific Now Blocked on Eve of Success.

The handful of supporters of the Martin-Semlin government who helped to fill the Victoria theatre last evening, must have had a damper placed on their hopes when they saw the magnificent reception that was tendered the opposition candidates. It was a grand meeting, and the enthusiasm ran high, a large majority of the audience remaining in their seats until midnight to listen to the speeches of the advocates of responsible government. There were a few interruptions, but they all came from three men, two of whom had stopped at too many waside inns on their way from their homes in the district, and consequently had to be ejected from the theatre. But despite these, the meeting proceeded smoothly, and those present were treated to speeches, the superior of which have never been heard on a public platform in Victoria.

The theatre was prettily decorated with flags and potted plants. Mr. W. A. Robertson, ex-M. P. P., occupied the chair, and around him on the stage were seated the following gentlemen: Price Ellison, M. P. P.; A. W. Smith, M. P. P.; Col. Baker, M. P. P.; D. M. Eberts, M. P. P.; R. McBride, M. P. P.; H. D. Helmcken, M. P. P.; J. P. Booth, M. P. P.; Capt. John Irving, M. P. P.; Charles Clifford, M. P. P.; William Robertson, M. P. P.; James Dunsmuir, M. P. P.; Thomas Earle, M. P.; Col. Prior, M. P.; Aldermen Phillips, Wallace Langley, C. Hayward, John Kinsman; ex-Aldermen John Hall, Edward Bragg; W. L. McDonald, Harry Graham, Harry Barnard, Arthur Heathorn, James H. Harvey, Arthur O'Reilly, Stanley Baker, George Baker, B. Oddy, Hy. Saunders, jr., Geo. Snider, Geo. Peaketh, Geo. Madigan, R. B Seabrook, D. R. Ker, T. A. Ker, Sidney Howell, Leopold Boscowitz, H. B. Robertson, Alex. Duncan, Allan Graham, Wm. Lorimer, Rd. Drake, Thos. Futcher, G. A. Kirk, Herbert Cuthbert, W H. Price, Gordon Hunter, J. E. Salmon, Henry Saunders, W. A. McKeown, Jno. Russell, C. H. Lugrin, W. H. Ellis, ex-Mayor John Grant, J. G. Tiarks, F. C. Davidge, T B. Pearson, T. B. Hall, R. Seabrook, sr., James Baker, L. G. McQuade, Michael McTiernan, Peter Corr, Joseph Boscowitz, Joshua Davies, Henry Brackman, James Muirhead, Capt. Sieward, Dr. James Helmcken and others.

The chairman, in introducing the speakers, said he did not suppose there was a single man who could stand up and say the members of the late government had received justice either at the hands of the government or the Lieut.-Governor of the province, and it was for the purpose of seeing whether they had the confidence of the people of Victoria that they were again offering themselves. If they had that confidence the people would vote to send them back to their seats again. As far as he was concerned, he was convinced they had not had British fair play and those present were all Britons and were determined they should have fair play and would show that by their votes. (Cheers). He was glad to see the ladies of Victoria had come to show their interest in political affairs. It was a pity they had no votes, but if they could not vote they could influence their husbands, brothers and sweethearts in the interest of Mr. Turner, Mr. McPhillips and Mr. Hall. A short time ago when the member for Cowichan had resigned his seat, the leader of the government went up to Cowichan and took his man Sword with him and spoke on behalf of his man and said to the people of Cowichan, "This man Sword I bring before you as a candidate who has got the ear of the government, and if you will return him you can depend upon it that we will look after your roads, streets and bridges." But the people of Cowichan returned their own man again, just as they did before. (Cheers.) Would Victoria, he enquired, go back on their votes? Would they not show themselves to be equal to the men of Cowichan and return these gentlemen with a larger majority than they did before? (Cheers and cries of "Yes, we will.") There were a large number of speakers to address the meeting—some of them had never probably before addressed those present—and he would not therefore occupy more of the time. The meeting was called in the interest of the candidates and in behalf of no one else. When the meeting had heard what the speakers had to say he felt sure they would go down on the 2nd February and return them with a bigger majority than they were put in by before.

MR. McPHILLIPS.

Mr. McPhillips, who was received with great cheering, said that before he proceeded to the remarks he would make that evening he would say that that magnificent demonstration in our beautiful city of Victoria showed that the people were willing to come and hear public questions well discussed. When he looked behind him he saw the representatives of all the great interests that are centred in the city; elements of trade, and representatives of the people of all classes. He felt satisfied that whether he polled or not the votes of the majority of his hearers, that he certainly had an intelligent audience. In the presence of ladies they had the assurance that the fair sex were lending their support in this great cause, and in their presence they had also the great satisfaction to know that the citizens of Victoria would comport themselves so that they would have no unseemly disturbances at that meeting. They had a good list of speakers there and as he was one of the candidates he would lay these important public questions before them. Before he did so, he would have to refer to why it was he had to appear before them. He thought they would all acquit him of not being very desirous of again going through a contest such as an election contest always was. It was a very harassing work and although it was a pleasing thing to meet one's fellow constituents, but in addition to the arduous labors of life to devote one's attention to public questions, he assured them and he knew they would follow him, that it was with a great deal of difficulty men were able to snatch enough time for the purpose.

He was there consequent upon the fact that there was a variance of legal opinion as to whether he was entitled to sit in the house or not. He brought before the Speaker of the legislative assembly his reasons for resigning, also in the public press those reasons were given to the voters of Victoria. He might say that until the 12th day of January which was the day following the last day he sat in the house, he was very confident that he was rightly entitled to sit in that house, but upon that date, 12th January, owing to his being perhaps over cautious, he had written to a very eminent member of the legal profession, Mr. John S. Ewart, Q.C., and also opposed to him politically—not that he thought either that gentleman or Mr. Bodwell would be biassed, Mr. Bodwell was also against him in politics, but in those commanding figures at the bar they always have confidence wherever political matters enter into the subject at all. So on the 12th January he received a letter bearing on the subject matter as to whether he was qualified. He would not give it in detail, but Mr. Ewart said he was very sorry to have to come to that conclusion and he did not mean to indicate that he thought the points involved were incapable of argument. With that before him, the speaker asked, was he not an honorable man to refuse to sit longer in that house? (Cries of "Yes" and "Hear, hear".)

He was sent by them to that house to discharge a duty there and he thought he did not take any undue compliment to himself to say that he had fought their battles well while he was there. (Cheers.) But at the same time he did not want to sit there unwarrantably; neither did he want to sit there by force of any special statute (cheers)—and he came back to them, to the electorate of the city of Victoria, to hear their expression of opinion and to know whether they had confidence in the course he had pursued. He had a good many legal opinions given to him on this matter. Ordinarily, a great deal of money was paid for opinions. (Laughter.) He had the greatest satisfaction in telling them he had all that great wealth of legal opinion and it had not cost him a cent. (Laughter.) Then he had the opinion of the Attorney-General of the province of British Columbia, who volunteered the statement on that platform that he was perfectly qualified to sit, but he thought most inconsistently now advocated that he should not be returned. He said inconsistently, because those other gentlemen must be said to have been absolutely disqualified, but he must be qualified, because they had the ipse dixit of the Attorney-General, whose voice is paramount. Therefore he had the hardihood to place himself before them and if he was not their emissary in the house he had no right to be there. He was now there to ask them whether his conduct in that house had been such as to commend it and whether his interpretation of the public questions had complied with their belief in the way in which they should be discussed and settled. (Cheers.)

The first question he would take up was the Election Petitions act. He had the honor—because he considered it an honor—to move a resolution in the house against the passage of that act, and he would tire them to the extent of reading that resolution to them, and though it was sufficiently pointed in its expressions to indicate to them the reason why, and would appeal to all true Canadians and British subjects who had inherited the qualities of British fair play. (Cheers). Mr. McPhillips then read the resolution, which stated that legislation the administration of justice was staying the administration of justice was false in principle and subversive of law and justice, and made the courts of law the mere mandatories of the political power that may be in the ascendancy, and had ever opposed the rights of the people, and that any interference with the trial of election petitions was wrong in principle, and was a matter that ought not to be dealt with by any bill. (Cheers). He moved that resolution, which he thought commended itself in its terms to all true citizens of Canada. (Cheers). Yet there was a vote taken upon that resolution, and he was glad that the annals—the pages of the public journals of British Columbia—record how the members voted; and he would be a poor prophet if at some future time they would not hide their faces in shame that they ever put themselves on record as supporting an act of any such legislation. The names of those who opposed that bill were Eberts, Pooley, Booth, Irving, W. R. Robertson, J. Dunsmuir, Ellison, Clifford, McBride, Baker, Helmcken, Hall and McPhillips. (Cheers). Those are the men he stood with in that house, and they were the men he wanted them to send him back to support in that house. (Cheers). They were there at that meeting that night, to show by their presence that they are still in unison of thought with his humble self, who had the honor of moving that resolution. That division was one of 19 to 13. Mr. Turner was absent then; Mr. Neilson had unfortunately departed this life; Mr. Henderson had unfortunately gone across the floor of the house, or did not sit on the right side where he should have sat. (Laughter). They were deprived of two other members who ought to have been there that night whose election had been stopped by the veto of that house. When they came to the reading of the bill the division was 15 to 13. If Mr. Henderson stayed with them, if Mr. Stoddart had been in his place, where he rightly ought to have been, and if Mr. Turner had been there, they could have defeated that bill. Some of my friends may say that I put too many "ifs" in there, but he left the people to judge of that. (Applause). He never knew a British people who would not stand up for right (hear, hear) and if, by the intervention of Providence, they lost one member, and if they lost another because he was not an honest man or would not keep his engagements, and if they had opposed to them a statute-made member, he said, did they receive British fair play? (No, no). Perhaps his view of that legislation might be thought to be a little biassed, but he would refer to a few of the newspapers of Canada. The Ottawa Journal said the Martin government seemed to be carrying it with a high hand, and characterized the bill as a rotten use of power. The Montreal Witness, a supporter of the people now in office, said the bill was forced through the house. The Montreal Star characterized it as a Joe Martin government, and says that things are not in a safe position in the country. The Montreal Gazette also took the same views. He was able to say that the press of all shades of politics had united in condemnation of that act. Both sides of politics were united on the subject. It was not a question between Liberals and Conservatives. He was a true enough Canadian, and knew there were millions of others who would cry down the question of party politics when an issue of that kind arose, and he spoke to the united wisdom of Liberals and Conservatives, not to a little coterie, but to Liberals and Conservatives who had only one great matter before them and only one great desire—to put their country in a national position and one that would be true to the traditions of the British race. (Cheers). Mr. Higgins occupied his seat on the floor of the house to-day because the judge found one vote in his favor, but that court—that self-same court which was powerful enough to seat Mr. Higgins—was not to be permitted to exercise its high functions and seat Mr. Stoddart. It was the loss of a supporter and not the representative of a constituency the government feared. The case was the worst one that had happened since the days when election petitions were settled by votes of the representatives. He was glad it had roused public opinion, and it spoke well for the citizens of Victoria that it had done so. That was the expression of the Montreal Gazette—that it had roused public opinion, and that it did not promise well for those who passed it when they came up for judgment. If he had no other support than the national journals he had quoted from it would prove that, as far as in them lay, the people of the province are trying to carry out the influences of British principles. He would shed his last drop of blood for the maintenance of the British constitution (cheers) not, as was stated by Col. Gregory, for the Turner administration. It ill befitted any one to deter any one from having a proper appreciation of those principles which he said were fundamental. (Cheers). Speaking to the youth of this province, the speaker advised them not to be led away or allow those to be trifled with. Sorry would be the day for the province and for Canada when those principles were weakened in the slightest. There was an indignation meeting in Victoria; it was no pantomime or amusement, but their prominent business men were there, and members of the House of Commons also. So was the mayor of this city, as well as other prominent men, taking part in the country's affairs, sharing in the effort for its progress. There the citizens of Victoria voiced their indignation at the passage of that law. The Attorney-General did not attend that meeting; he had other business to do. He was curt in his letter of excuse, as usual, and he said that the bill was necessary to provide two constituencies with representation during that session, and that the bill was very proper and necessary. That was a longer speech than the Attorney-General ever delivered in the house in support of the bill. He could only quote an Ontario statute. He was answered by the speaker that if Mr. Prentice was advised he was legally entitled to take his seat, let him come and take it but what we did object to was that any one should be placed in his seat in any parliament throughout the British dominions who was not there through the general law of the land; that was what they objected to. Gentlemen thoroughly impartial and well known, such as the Hon. Robert Beaven — (cheers)—who saw the members who were advocating the passage of that law were violating the promises made to obtain seats in the house and violating the principles of representative government. Mr. Beaven was surprised that a man of the experience of Mr. Semlin should degrade himself by such an act and allow himself to be dragged down by those who are his masters. Think of the honorable career of that hon. gentleman and of his position to-day;—absolutely under the dominion of the Attorner-General, so much so that he had to sit in his place and say nothing throughout the long debate. The hon. Attorney-General retires to his couch, takes his sleep and returns when his sweet will allows him and all the time these faithful henchmen sit there and do not open their mouths. Never a master of hounds had a more obedient pack. (Cheers and laughter.) There was a man sitting at the time that vote was taken and voting to keep himself in his seat—that was Mr. Deane. The speaker was surprised that in the province of British Columbia any one should have so little manhood, but he felt that Mr. Deane acted as he did because his master said so. He could have been the rebellious one of the pack and jumped over the fence and come back later. (Laughter.) Col. Gregory had something to say also at that indignation meeting; he pointed out that the late government did a somewhat similar act in the case of East Lillooet and that they thought it expedient that constituency should be represened. Well, one contends one thing and one another and you have a disagreement. Then after consideration you agree to settle it by a little give and take. That was the position before Mr. Stoddart contested Mr. Prentice's seat. There was litigation pending. Counsel on both sides came together and agreed that Mr. Prentice should sit during this session and agreed that a statute should be passed during the session declaring the seat vacant and a new election had and then those opposed to him had the hardihood to come before the electors of the city and tell them that the present cases are similar. At the trial of Mr. Prentice's case, Mr. Soues, who was a material witness, wired to the Attorney-General that he was informed he was to be a witness but would not leave his office without permission. That telegram was read by Col. Gregory and he said the Attorney-General was not there to answer hypothetical questions. The Attorney-General's duty was to attend to public business and to conserve the laws of the province, as a servant of the crown, or else we could have no good laws. (Cheers.) Col. Gregory said there was a whole lot of politics in the petition. As a fact that was not a political meeting, but an outburst of public indignation against legislation of that character. Another very estimable gentleman, Mr. Crow-Baker, was there and he moved the second resolution. He was a perfectly independent man, but Col. Gregory tried to make out that Mr. Crow-Baker was there in any other than an independent position.

The speaker left the meeting to judge whether Mr. Crow-Baker was not independent and appeared there as a citizen because he felt great interests were at stake. The government had a convention that brought out three gentlemen to contest the seats and one of the speakers was Mr. R. Smith, who desired to be considered as representing the laboring classes. Mr. Smith tried to make out that the Turner administration and its predecessors in the past desired to trample on the laboring classes, the people, the masses. It was a specious argument. Let any one point to one thing in the legislation of the Turner government or their predecessors in office that bore that construction. The friend of the laboring classes was the government that looked to the future—(Hear, hear)—and seeks the development of the country. There was nothing to be seen in the speech from the throne about the development of the country, extension of railways, or any other undertakings which require the employment of labor. The cry of the government was "retrenchment," but yet how inconsistent were they. They said we must have retrenchment at all hazards and at every point. He hoped that in their enthusiasm for retrenchment they would not cripple the trade of the province nor hamper the men who were endeavoring to develop the resources of the country. When men came to a new province—or country—they could not expect to find the same conditions as in the old. They came to a country which they believed to have lots of natural resources, and naturally looked for an administration that would take measures to provide them with employment, and at the same time develop the country. Take the case of Sir John A. Macdonald—a name dear to the heart of every Canadian—when he undertook to build the C.P.R. the croakers were heard saying that the road never could be built, that it was beyond the capacity of the Dominion of Canada. But the road had been built by the genius of people of Canada. Yet there had been a gentleman get up on that platform and tell the people of British Columbia that all they could do was to sit down and weep. The members of the government claimed in one breath that we had no assets, and in the next breath that we had untold wealth. The policy advocated by the party he belonged to was to draw upon the credit of the province, develop the resources of it and thus give the laboring class of the province that work which they had come here to receive. (Applause.) He was not before that audience as a professional politician. He personally had no special ambition to be returned to the house, but he did wish to take some of the burden and heat of the day, and he rose up to denounce legislation of the character lately passed by the legislative assembly which ostensibly aimed at the exclusion of aliens shut out every corporation in Eastern Canada and every corporation in the northern land as well. Hydraulicing and dredging were the only exceptions, and all these companies, whether English or Canadian, could not have one bit of property in the province from now on, and they could only get licenses at the sweet will of the government, and, when one did get a license it could be taken away at the sweet will of the government. The legislation passed was, in his opinion, un-English and un-British. Was it at all likely that the province would get a dollar of Canadian or British capital invested in it, if the capital was to be at the mercy of the Master of the Hounds across James Bay? (Laughter and prolonged applause.) The speaker pointed out that the words "Lieutenant-Governor-in-council" simply meant the government of the day—it did not mean the Lieutenant-Governor; if it did, there was a possibility that he might be an independent person, but the act said "such authorization may at any time be cancelled, and in case of such cancellation, etc. He called upon people to think of this, pointing out that it was but reasonable that the act should run "may at any time be cancelled for cause"—a proviso which was usually inserted. As the act now stood the government could at any time cancel a license without cause. Therefore, it stood to reason that English and American capital would not place itself at the caprice of a government which had it in its power at any time to withdraw the privileges they had granted and on the strength of which capital might have been invested in British Columbia was it likely that any undertaking would invest capital and place itself at the sweet will and mercy of such a government as we had now in office? The legislature of this province had now passed legislation of a character that was outside the proper channels and not in accordance with the proper proceedings. When the act was seriously considered and not merely scanned by the electorate of British Columbia, it would be found that a wail would go up and the people would regret that they had ever been a party to so sweeping a law.

Again, the government were claiming great credit for having done away with the so-called mortgage tax. There was no reason to run away with the idea that the mortgage tax was a terrible thing, because it was not imposed upon the mortgagor, but upon the lender. He (the speaker) had had a good deal of experience with regard to the mortgage tax. In his professional capacity he represented clients who possessed thousands of dollars, and, speaking honestly, he could say as an absolute fact that his clients paid the tax. He (the speaker) when addressing a meeting of about 1,500 persons in the A. O. U. W. hall in Victoria, had challenged any one to get up and say that he (the mortgagor) had to pay the tax. No one rose. Why? Because the tax was imposed on the lender—the man in New York, Montreal or London—who undoubtedly should pay something towards the maintenance of law and order and the repairing of the roads in this province. (Applause). If this tax were to fall upon the mortgagor, he would be the last man to impose it. Speaking for clients in Eastern Canada who had money to loan, he could say that they were willing to loan money at any rate of interest, from 8 per cent. to 5 per cent., in Victoria, and they would never ask the borrower to pay the mortgage tax. He did not want any one to believe that he was advocating the imposition of the mortgage tax, but he did say that the man who loans the money ought to pay the tax; furthermore, it would be well for people to know that the removal of the mortgage tax was no great boon. The man who paid that tax was the man who lent the money. The province had to pay its debts, and it was only just and right that the capitalist who put his money out at interest in this province should pay something for the government of the country. The government wished to lead people to believe that they had raised a great burden from their shoulders; as a matter of fact, it was a shadowy bugaboo, and the people had still to put the sack on their shoulders. (Laughter).

He hoped he had not tired his audience. (Cries of "You have not!" "Go on!") He did not wish to refer to Mr. Joseph Martin, who had actually paid him a compliment on that platform. Mr. Martin did not like giving any credit to the speaker for resigning his seat, but still he had whipped up his followers to oppose his election. He had had an expression of opinion from one of the most eminent Eastern lawyers, who said he might infringe the law if he took his seat. He had therefore resigned, and he was pleased to have the opportunity of testing the voice of the people. There was an opportunity for the people of Victoria to show that they had, as British subjects and Canadians, a strong belief in the fundamental principles of the British constitution. He had no doubt but that the electorate of Victoria would declare for constitutional principles and British law, and that they would return him in conjunction with his colleagues. (Loud and prolonged applause).

MR. RICHARD HALL.

Mr. R. Hall in coming forward had an enthusiastic reception. He did not ask to be returned as a personal matter, said Mr. Hall, but he wanted to see every elector who voted for him vote for his two colleagues also. He had not wavered from the principles which he had held last July, but he was glad to know that many who voted against him and his colleagues then were now prepared to support them. (Loud applause). He was assured of the support of the gentlemen having commercial interests in Victoria, and he now appealed to them with the utmost confidence. He (the speaker) was not to be led by a man who had come here with a valise—not a carpet bag—nor did he propose to follow in that man's wake. Owing to the interpretation placed upon the act by the Attorney-General, he had had to resign his seat, but he had no doubt but that he would be returned by an increased majority. During the last campaign he had made his position clear—viz., he was in favor of a progressive policy, so that the great natural resources of the province might be developed, but he would support any legislation that was brought forward in what he considered the best interests of the province. During that campaign he had stated that he was not supporting any monopolies or corporations, but that he was independent and thoroughly in accord with economical and progressive government. Furthermore, he was prepared to support any legislation in the interests of the workingman. He did not say that to catch votes—he meant it. (Loud applause). He had been brought in contact with workingmen for years, and he had that opinion of them, that he could not and would not vote against any measure that might be brought forward in their interests. Those were his views, stated during the last campaign, and the electors had seen fit then to endorse them. He had not changed at all—those were the views he would advocate when in the house.

A voice—"You will soon be there." (Cheers).

Mr. Hall went on to say that he could not help but notice a remark made by one of the speakers, viz., that notwithstanding what the government called the blighting influence of the Turner government, the country had developed and grown while that government had been in power. It was also stated by government speakers that Victoria could not hope to control the affairs of the country. Neither Victoria nor Vancouver had ever asked a government for more than they were entitled to, and he could congratulate the late government on their impartiality. "I ask you," said Mr. Hall, "how can you come out in support of a man who, to secure his own election, pandered to the passions of the people he is now representing as against Victoria?" Any such feeling of antagonism was to be deprecated, more especially between the two cities, because they had mutual interests. Mr. Hall wound up by stating that he had nothing further to say. He would have several more speeches to make in the course of the campaign, and did not want to run dry. He did, however, hope that the electors would carefully consider the issues before them. He again impressed on the audience that it would be not only impolitic but dangerous to cast away votes in splitting, and urged all to vote for "the three." If a man did not feel justified in voting for all three he might just as well not vote for any of them. However, he was fully satisfied that all three would be elected. (Applause). As far as he could see, the government only wanted to see the strength of the opposition; they would see it, and be sorry for them. (Loud and prolonged cheers).

MR. TURNER.

Mr. J. H. Turner, the veteran representative of the city, received an enthusiastic reception at the hands of the electors. The applause which greeted him lasted several minutes, and when it subsided he launched forth in a practical statement of the political questions that the people are now interested in. In opening he had inadvertently referred to his party as the government, and being corrected, replied, "Oh, well, we will soon be the government party again," a reply that was received with cheers. He referred briefly to the transaction between the Nelson branch of his house and the government, which made it necessary for him to resign, and in answer to Mr. Bodwell's charges that recent governments had condoned such actions, said that the Independence of Parliament act had been in force for years, but never had it been interpreted as it is now being interpreted. Past governments had always considered that the spirit of the act was to prevent ministers or members from contracting with the government. It has now been decided that it prohibits even selling a few cents' worth of goods to the government, but at the same time that the men who had made small sales to the government resigned, a minister of the crown entered into a big contract to do work for the government. The minister escaped because his concern had been turned into a limited liability company, although the minister may be the whole company. However he (Mr. Turner) had resigned, and he was confident that he would be returned. (Applause).

As to his failure to be present at the opening of the house, Mr. Turner said that he had been forced to go to England on vital business, which he had not been able to do before on account of his close attention to public business. He had been assured by the government before leaving that the house would not be called together until the usual time at the end of January, and believing this he had taken a residence in London till January 8, which, if the government had kept their word, would have given him plenty of time to get back for the opening. As soon as he learned that the house was to meet on January 5 he gave up his business and started for home. Unfortunately he was delayed by the elements. Then Mr. Martin had said that the opposition had made a fuss because the house was not adjourned from Thursday till Monday. This had always been the practice, and was done out of courtesy to the opposition to give them an opportunity to consider the speech. The Attorney-General had also said that the late government continually adjourned over several days. This was absolutely false, as a reference to the journals of the house would show. The present government had found it necessary to adjourn several times because they had no business ready. The only business they had done this session was to manufacture two members, and they did that because they knew that a motion would be placed on the papers questioning the action of the Lieutenant-Governor in dismissing the late government, and that to hold their places they had to manufacture a majority. The election bill had been passed before the speech from the throne had been considered—a thing that had never before been done in a legislature in any colony, province or the mother country. Many a government had been defeated on an amendment to the speech, and this party temporarily in power were afraid to consider it before seating two supporters by statute. The opposition had fought the bill desperately, and they would have continued the fight until Thursday, the day of trial, had it not been for what he considered an unfair decision of the chairman. The government knew that they would lose the seat if the case came to trial. Mr. Martin had said that, had the case gone against Mr. Prentice, he could still have taken his seat. Did anybody think that Mr. Prentice, who refused to take his seat on the advice of a lawyer, for the fear of the penalty of $500 a day, would have taken the seat after a judge had decided that he was not entitled to it? (Applause).

At the government meeting the other evening Mr. Bodwell had said that no charges of boodling had been made against the late government during the campaign. (Laughter.) Why, said Mr. Turner, their papers simply teemed with charges. They said the then government were afraid of exposure. They have been in power several months and so far there has been no exposure. They made all kinds of charges but they have turned out to have been campaign lies. Their whole cry has dwindled down to the mortgage tax and the miners' licenses.

The present party, he would not say government, had introduced in British Columbia a lot of smart political tricks. Before their advent British Columbia had gone along in a straightforward way.

The party was in charge of one arbitrary man. He felt sorry for his old friend Mr Semlin, who had long served the province. Mr. Semlin was allowed to speak once in a while, but the premier, a minister, an able man, was never heard from. The night of the great debate they never said a word. They had received their orders and had to follow them. It reminded him very much of a puppet show and Judy show. Punch ruled with a high hand, knocking down all his puppets, but he forgot the public executioner by whom he was finally hung. They might see a similar condition of things in British Columbia before long.

The government had not even a pretence of a policy but devoted their whole time to running down the opposition. In the speech from the throne reference was made to the development to be brought about in the Boundary Creek country through railway construction. They forgot to add that the construction of that railway had been brought about by the late government. Another section of the speech referred to the intention to repeal the mortgage tax. They omitted to say in reference to that that a commission had been appointed by the late government to enquire into the incidence of that tax and also into the condition of the agricultural classes. It was not usual to remove a tax before first finding out what effect it would have, who would be pressed and who would be relieved. That was why the commission was appointed. The government had cancelled the commission after $500 had been expended on it For another $500 the work could have been completed. He had received a partial report from the commission, which showed that 75 per cent. of the borrowers did not pay the tax, but it was paid by the lender. Therefore the lender and not the borrower benefited by the repeal of the tax. This, he held, was the first move towards single tax, which would move heavily on the farmer and small landowners. The system of inscribed stock was adopted by the late government as an admirable one and the government might get the province into serious trouble if they attempted to interfere with it. By that method the debt cost the province $35,000 less than under the old system.

The Attorney-General had a great deal to say about "Mr. Turner's railway policy." That policy, the speaker contended, had been a success. (Applause.) There had been more railways built in British Columbia than in any other province in the Dominion. The development of the mines of Kootenay could not have been brought about but for the means of transportation provided by the policy of recent governments. The Attorney-General had been very severe on the British Pacific, which he referred to as a "bogus scheme." What an insult that was to the chairman of the meeting at which Mr. Martin spoke, Mr. E. V. Bodwell. Mr. Bodwell had been a great supporter of the British Pacific. Did Mr. Bodwell think the British Pacific was a bogus scheme? Then Mr. Bodwell himself had referred to the railway policy of the late government as an extravagant policy. On the occasion that he (Mr. Turner) had been called upon to explain his action in respect to the British Pacific, Mr. Bodwell had stood on that same stage and asked that $240,000 a year be granted in aid of that railway.

The late government had a good railway policy. The present government would not carry it out but there would be a party in power before long who would do so. (Applause.) That party would bring in a northern as well as a southern railway. Before their dismissal they had made arrangements by which he believed the road from the north would have been built. (Applause.) He gave way to no man in his desire to see that railway from the north built. On the platform he had stated why the railway could not be built under the arrangement which Mr. Bodwell advocated. The province could not stand it at that time. They had made a reasonable proposition to the promoters under which he believed the railway would be built. (Applause.)

Under the late governments, continued Mr. Turner, the revenue had steadily increased and was equal to the expenditure, the only money borrowed being for public works. Out of the general revenue over two hundred thousand dollars could be taken for public works, but it required more than that to develop the province and money had to be borrowed. If the policy advocated by Mr. Martin was followed the province would never advance. There would be no railways, no public works, no work for the workingmen.

Reference had been made to redistribution but the government seemed to be afraid of it. There was no doubt but that it was their intention to reduce the representation from Vancouver Island, Victoria and Esquimalt being particularly aimed at. The late government had provided well for the mainland constituencies. He would not admit that the representation of Vancouver Island should be decreased. If Victorian's favored such a policy they might as well give up. There was no sectionalism in this; Vancouver Island had a certain number of members and would retain them. (Applause.) There were few Victoria business men who were not interested in other parts of the province and they had provided liberally for the development of all sections. There are rich things on the Island and he often felt that they had been neglected by Victorians.

As he had said before, the late government had brought up the revenue. When he had said a few years ago there it would reach a million and a quarter he was ridiculed. Now it was more than that and before long it would reach two millions. The cost of governing the country had been less in proportion to the revenue than it was ten years ago.

Col. Gregory had gone back to 1882 and said that at that time the Lieut.-Governor was called upon to dismiss the Walkem government. He might have been called upon to do so, but he did not do so. He waited until the house met, so that he could find out the standing of the parties. The last election left the two parties evenly divided, with two seats undecided which were certain to go in favor of the then government. The Lieut.-Governor could not have known that there was a traitor in the ranks of one party, but despite this he dismissed the ministry.

Mr. Paterson had said that placer miners did nothing towards opening up the country. He would not have said that if he had been here in the sixties. If there were more placer miners here, said Mr. Turner, the country would be better off, for as was well known, the placer miner spent $1 for every 80 cents that he took out of the ground. The policy of the present government seemed to be to retard the development of the country. They knew that they could get the necessary money to do so but they did not want it; they did not want population or public works. (Loud applause.)

MR. EBERTS.

Mr. D. M. Eberts, after a few introductory remarks said he had read the speech of the Attorney-General, who had said that the late government had had no railway policy. Twenty years ago the country east of Kamloops was an unknown land and it took some time to get to Kamloops. The late government learned of the wealth of Kootenay and they took steps to open up that country by the construction of railways. It took some time to carry it out but the railway policy was carried out and it now met with the general approval of the people. The Spallumcheen valley, a magnificent wheat country, had been opened by the building of the Shuswap & Okanagan railway, and now the farmers who formerly had no market for their wheat, keep several flour mills in operation and besides export thousands of tons of wheat. Ten years ago the revenue from Kootenay was but $21,000, but by the development brought about by the late Government the revenue had been greatly increased. The Nakusp & Slocan Railway had been built and it had not cost the province of British Columbia one cent. Then there was the building of the Nelson and Fort Sheppard and Kaslo and Slocan railways, both brought about by the late government and these works of development had brought the revenue from Kootenay up from $25,000 annually to $348,000 annually. (Applause.) In the speech from the throne reference was made to the development of the Boundary Creek country by the building of a railway. The construction of that railway from Robson to the Boundary Creek had been brought about by the Turner government. The company, the Columbia & Western, had given up their land grant for a grant of $4,000 a mile. If the revenue of Kootenay had been brought up to $348,000 by railway construction, why should not the revenue from the even richer Boundary Creek country be likewise increased. The late government had done everything in their power to carry out their railway policy, which included a line from Kootenay to the coast and also the British Pacific railway. A grant of $4,000 a mile had been offered for the construction of the roads and it was no fault of the late government that the works had not been carried out. Had the railway from the coast to Teslin Lake been built it would not have cost the province a cent, while opening up a rich country and producing a large revenue.

The election bill passed a few days ago was a pernicious bill, continued Mr. Eberts, and such as never had been introduced in any other legislature. He firmly believed that the house had been called early for the sole purpose of passing the legislation before the courts could deal with the cases. The speaker referred at length to the trial of the East Lillooet election case, from the time of the service of the petition to the day it was set down for hearing. The government held that it was the fault of the petitioner that the case was put off but there was not a tittle of truth in that. The whole transaction was a put up job to keep the government in office and prevent the Lieut.-Governor from being decapitated. When the House of Commons met something would be heard of the Lieut.-Governor's action. (Applause.) The duties of the Lieut.-Governors will be defined and it will be shown that the constitution is not to be trifled with. (Applause.) The government knew that had the East Lillooet case come to trial they would have been left with a majority of one and with such a majority they could not have stood. When the case does come to trial Mr. Prentice must loose his seat. Mr. Prentice lived in West Lillooet and he ran in East Lillooet. He and a number of men who worked for him were on the West Lillooet list. He had his name and these names struck off the West Lillooet list and made application to have them placed on the East Lillooet list As is well known an application has to be in two months before the applicant's name can be placed on the list. An objection was raised to Mr. Prentice's application as he did not reside in East Lillooet where he wanted to vote. When Mr. Prentice saw his mistake he withdrew his application and asked Mr. Soues, the collector, to give him a certificate stating that his name had been on the list. Mr. Soues inadvertetedly did so; certified that Mr. Prentice's name had been on the list in East Lillooet, when his application had not been in two months and his name could not have been on the list. Mr. Prentice took that wrong certificate to Mr. Phair, the collector for West Lillooet, and thereby had his name replaced on the West Lillooet list. His name not being properly on any list he was not qualified. Mr. Soues, necessary witness for the petitioner, could not get permission from the Attorney-General to come to Victoria and give evidence. Mr. Phair, who could say that Mr. Prentice's name was on the West Lillooet list, but did not know that the certificate was a wrong one, and was therefore a good witness for Mr. Prentice, did get permission to come to Victoria. Had Mr. Soues been allowed to come down the case could have been decided in a few hours.

"But the chickens will come home to roost," said Mr. Eberts, "and it will make some people feel uncomfortable. (Applause.) There will be retribution for this dishonest and disloyal style of carrying out legislation; legislation that the majority were not many enough to defend in the house."

Mr. Eberts closed with an appeal to the electors to stand by their verdict of last summer, his effort all through being a most brilliant one.

Mr. H. D. Helmcken very briefly, as the hour was late, asked the electors to repeat the verdict of July last and return to the legislature the three men who had been forced to resign. He wanted his confreres in the house men who would uphold the constitution.

Mr Richard McBride, M.P.P. for Dewdney, was the last speaker of the evening and made a splendid impression in a short bright speech that evoked applause at every period. He briefly alluded to the outrageous provisions of the contested elections bill and predicted the overthrow that would meet the government who had trampled upon the constitution when they went back to their constituencies. After the hot shot that had been poured in by Mr. Eberts and was so greatly relished by the audience it was not necessary for him to say much more, for he was sure that on February 2 the people would show that they sympathized thoroughly with the opposition. He would only say one word more. The government were appealing to the workingmen, but