

COL PRIOR'S POSITION.

The Premier's Forceful Reply to Senator McInnes—The Crown's Prerogative Unlimited.

A Member of the Privy Council the Equal of all His Colleagues.

Replying to Senator McInnes' speech on the subject of Hon. E. G. Prior's position as a member of the cabinet, on the 12th inst.—

Hon. Sir Mackenzie Bowell said:—I am sure the Senate must have been pleased to hear the dispassionate manner in which the hon. gentleman delivered himself, more particularly his declaration that he was not actuated by anything like a party spirit in discussing a question of this kind. His calmness and moderation, and more particularly the speeches which he made in Victoria during the recent contest there, are the best answer to the hon. gentleman's statement. It is somewhat singular that the hon. gentleman, who has been most earnestly contending for a representative of British Columbia in the cabinet, should, upon the very first opportunity that the government have had to give that province representation in the cabinet, try to defeat their object. I admit that the policy of Sir John Macdonald, when that act was introduced—I do not know that any member of the cabinet discussed the question with my late chief officer than I did—was to place the controllers in the same position as under secretaries, or parliamentary heads, occupy in England, to defend the departments over which they preside so far as the departmental work is concerned. But is there anything in the language of the act which the hon. gentleman has quoted, and which he has so often said during his remarks has been violated to establish even by implication, that a controller could not be made a member of the cabinet if the policy of another government, under a different head, was to make him such?

Is there anything in the language of the act which deprives the crown of any of its prerogatives or any of the authority which it held before the passage of that measure? So far as the formation of the government is concerned, the prerogative of the crown is unlimited. My hon. friend from Prince Edward Island (Mr. Ferguson) and my hon. friend from Toronto (Sir Frank Smith) can occupy seats in the cabinet with all the power and authority which is vested in a cabinet minister, though they receive no salaries and are not heads of departments, is there anything in the statutes or in the constitution to show that a gentleman who happens to be controller and who draws a smaller salary than a minister of the crown cannot occupy the same position? Until the hon. gentleman can show that the prerogative of the crown is limited in the selection of advisers, he fails to make out his case. The subordinate character of the Controller of Inland Revenue is limited to the administration of the affairs of his department. When he was sworn in as a member of the Privy Council there was no limitation whatever to his power as a cabinet minister. If the hon. gentleman had argued that, upon the face of it, there was an apparent incongruity in the position held by the Controller of Inland Revenue, there might have been some force in his remarks. I am willing to admit that, but there is this distinction to be drawn—while he is administering the affairs of the department he does so under the advice, and control, if you like, of the Minister of Trade and Commerce, but when he is free to express his opinion and to assist in framing the policy of the government—whether it shall be a protective tariff, free trade, or unrestricted reciprocity—as the Minister of Trade and Commerce himself. I freely admit that there is a second Daniel come to judgment in the exposition of Parliamentary Government in the person of the hon. gentleman from New Westminster; yet he does not draw the distinction between the formation of a policy which should govern the country and deciding whether a man should be fined for smuggling, or whether an agent bears a certain rate of duty. More than that, turning again to the question of subordinate position, has the hon. gentleman taken the trouble to look at the formation of the British cabinet? Does he not know that, so far as the salaries of cabinet ministers are concerned, they range from £20,000 sterling a year to £2,000 sterling a year? Does he not know that Lord Salisbury, the Premier of Great Britain, receives a salary of £5,000 a year, while the Lord Chancellor receives £10,000 a year, and the Viceroy of Ireland £20,000 a year; and does he imagine that because of this difference in salary they occupy different positions in the cabinet, or that the member of the cabinet who receives the highest salary has the most influence in the formation of the policy of the government? Mr. Morley, when a member of the Gladstone government, received a salary of £2,500. No one will say, who knows anything of that gentleman, that he was an inferior member of the cabinet, or a man of inferior intellect, or that he occupied any less prominent position in the political world, and particularly in the United Kingdom, than any of his colleagues, except perhaps the Premier of that day himself, Mr. Gladstone.

The Vice-President of the Council on Education, who was also a member of the cabinet, receives only £2,000 a year. The Duke of Norfolk, who certainly is not an inferior man in the political world of the empire, yet he is not a member of the cabinet, yet he is the postmaster-general and receives a salary of £2,500. The postmaster-general in the Gladstone administration received a salary of £2,500. There is no limit whatever to the power of a prime minister, with the authority of the crown, to bring to his cabinet whomsoever he pleases. Mr. Gladstone had in his cabinet, but seven members; Lord Salisbury to-day has nineteen members in his cabinet. Some of the officers, prominent men in England, holding portfolios, were not members of the late cabinet, but those holding precisely the same position to-day are members of the cabinet, and vice versa. The very instance I have given you—that of the postmaster-general illustrates this. In the Gladstone government Mr. Morley, when he was post-

master-general, was a member of the cabinet. The Duke of Norfolk to-day, who occupies the same position, is not a member of the cabinet. It illustrates what the hon. gentleman said—and it was a true statement—that the constitution of England, on which our constitution is framed, is so elastic that you can adapt it to any and all circumstances. There is no question about that, unless there is a law to the contrary. The hon. gentleman, in his wise head, I readily admit the hon. gentleman's superior knowledge, particularly on constitutional law, but all he has to do is to refer not only to precedent but also to the fact that the country in England, and he will find that in these matters there is no limit whatever to the prerogative of the crown. There is no inferiority, as he attempts to establish, because Mr. Prior receives \$5,000 a year, while other members of the cabinet receive \$7,000. My hon. friend from Toronto (Sir Frank Smith) and my hon. friend from Prince Edward Island (Mr. Ferguson) receive no salary at all. So far as their position before the country is concerned it is perhaps more honorable than that of a man who receives a salary and sits at the council board, for the reason that they are willing to give their time, their talent and their ability in order to assist in the governing of the country without receiving any remuneration whatever; but at the same time they are not burdened with the duties of a portfolio. While the hon. gentleman is so anxious to know what the intention of the policy of Sir John Macdonald, when he placed that law on the statute book was not to make the controllers members of the cabinet, it does not follow because a prime minister and his government have a particular policy at one time, that therefore it becomes like the laws of the Medes and Persians, unalterable. If so, when my hon. friend crosses the floor of the house, I hope he will carry out the same principle and take the ground that this government having placed on the statute book a certain tariff he is not to change it. I scarcely think that he would take that position. The hon. gentleman seems to think that because the title of honorable is only retainable by a controller of customs or a controller of inland revenue while he holds office, therefore that affects his position in the government. The hon. gentleman himself, if he ceases to be a senator, will cease to hold the title of honorable which he now holds. I do not think that that fact interferes in the slightest degree with his independence and his right to assert his opinion in this house. For the fact that Mr. Prior has been sworn in as a privy councillor, and the fact that he is a member of the cabinet, confers upon him the title of honorable. How the hon. gentleman can say that Mr. Prior has not the same right and authority in the cabinet as any other member of the Privy Council, because he is a controller, is a marvel to me, and altogether beyond my comprehension. First of all the man who takes the oath of a Privy Councillor, and then is given a seat in the cabinet, no matter what position he may occupy, whether it be at the head of a department or whether he has no office at all has just the same power and authority and the same right to express an opinion as the man who is prime minister. If my hon. friend sat at the council board, as I have done, with the hon. gentleman from Toronto (Sir Frank Smith) I think he would find that hon. gentleman has opinions to express and that he enforces them whenever he thinks it necessary in the interests of the country to do so, and so it would be precisely with Mr. Prior. The hon. gentleman referred to Mr. Bourinot and used some very strong language which left impressions on my mind that he was quoting the language of Mr. Bourinot himself. Now I know Mr. Bourinot tolerably well, and I was rather amazed and put the question as to whether he was quoting the language of Mr. Bourinot. The hon. gentleman said that he was quoting the very exalted opinion of the constitutional and parliamentary knowledge of that gentleman. He had not so exalted an opinion of that gentleman when he addressed the electors of Victoria. He then represented Mr. Bourinot as being the mere creature of the government. That is not the actual language he used but that is the purport of it. He used language something like this, "suppose he were not questioned the correctness of the report in the Times, his own newspaper, and to which he called my attention; it reports him to have said:

"I leave the house to judge which statement of the hon. gentleman is correct, that which he has made to-day when he told the senate that Mr. Bourinot had given a distinct and positive opinion, using language something like this, that it was an outrage on the constitution, or when he told the people of British Columbia, on the 26th day of December, that the reply sent by Dr. Bourinot was to the effect that he never gave an opinion on the question."

Hon. Mr. McInnes (B.C.)—That telegram was never sent to me.

Hon. Sir Mackenzie Bowell—I did not say it was. The hon. gentleman did not deny it, though, and he had no right to deny it. The hon. gentleman was criticizing an editorial and a telegram which appeared in the Colonist, which was supporting Colonel Prior, that that was the language of Dr. Bourinot. It can be easily verified as to whether it is true or not. But the hon. gentleman continued:

Reading between the lines, it was plain as daylight that if Dr. Bourinot could have given an affirmative answer when he was asked, it would have been flashed from one end of the country to the other.

Hon. Mr. McInnes (B.C.)—Hear, hear.

Hon. Sir Mackenzie Bowell—The hon. gentleman had not so high an opinion of Dr. Bourinot then. He continued:

All these telegrams, he firmly believed, had been concocted at some way or another, and sent out here for a vile and brutal purpose. I do not know what brutality there is in a telegram stating that a man never gave an opinion upon a certain subject. I leave that to the hon. gentleman to explain. Perhaps, it grated upon his ears, and his fine sensitiveness was so shocked that he could not find other language to express himself than to say that these telegrams were sent out here. Then the hon. gentleman went on to say:

We would ask again could any one in that audience suppose that if Dr. Bourinot could have telegraphed a reply saying,

"Yes, you can occupy a controllership and have a seat in the cabinet," that it would not have been made the most of by the Colonist.

The Senator himself telegraphed to Dr. Bourinot to do so, he says. He says he telegraphed on Sunday.

Hon. Sir Frank Smith—On Sunday!

Hon. Sir Mackenzie Bowell—Yes, he was then acting on the principle that the justness of the means is not the end, but the end is the end.

The Senator last Sunday had sent the following question by wire to Dr. Bourinot—"Can controllers occupy the dual position of controllers and cabinet ministers? Please answer, I am the present no answer had been received."

Then somebody cried out "And never will," and the hon. gentleman continued:

"Perhaps so, but the natural inference was that if an affirmative answer could have been given it would have been flashed across the wires in short time. Dr. Bourinot must be so under the control of the government that he dare not reply to a telegram, although in the past the senator had always been ready to oblige and accommodate officials in Ottawa."

Has Dr. Bourinot emerged from that state of vassalage in which he existed last December, so that he could now state that we had violated the constitution in a "vile and brutal manner?" Any one who knows Dr. Bourinot knows that it is a base slander on his reputation. A man who occupies a high position in this country, I do not believe there is a man who occupies the same position that he does, or any other position, who is more thoroughly independent of those who appointed him, and of those whom he is surrounded, than Dr. Bourinot. If he had an opinion on this question he would not hesitate a moment to express it, and I appeal to those who have known him for a number of years that that is not strictly correct. Whether his opinion favored the government of to-day or whether it favored the opposition, it has been the same to Dr. Bourinot. It is true he gave certain opinions when asked by the government, and he occupied a high position in this country, in reference to certain questions which occurred concerning the Manitoba school question. He was perfectly right in that, but he received the condemnation of the opposition for doing so, because it did not appear to be in accord with their views, just as he is condemned here because he very properly refused to answer a telegram sent to him during a political campaign. When he refused to answer from to-day I do not know, but in the hon. gentleman's estimation Dr. Bourinot is to-day one of the best officers in the country, and the hon. gentleman has every possible reason to be proud of him. He requires only two months to elapse since the denunciation of his character which appears in this paper, to enable the hon. gentleman to form a correct opinion of the character of Dr. Bourinot. In the course of the week of December 19, they have capitalized the following—printers will understand what I mean by the word capitalize:—

The Senator also created some amusement by pointing out the vague wording in the letter of the hon. gentleman, in the morning, quoting Sir Mackenzie Bowell as stating that Mr. Wood and Col. Prior will be cabinet ministers.

Was the hon. gentleman as disingenuous when he then said, "There is nothing in the telegram to indicate any thing of the kind. What I stated was plain and distinct—the telegram speaks for itself. The whole grisly atmosphere will not use the word 'atmosphere' of those who are opposing the government in Victoria was shocked because the telegram was sent—supposing that it be correct—to Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney, and he would have the Premier of the country communicate in order to obtain an answer upon a matter of this importance? The Lieutenant-Governor is the appointee of the Dominion Government, and all communications on public matters between the Secretary of State or the Premier must be through him, and especially on a matter of this kind where it refers to the formation of the government. He is not asked to interfere, not asked to do a single thing in the way of interfering with the election—he is simply asked to inquire of Col. Prior if he would accept a position with the government, and that is all. What did Col. Prior answer to that? The answer, which the hon. gentleman very dexterously omitted to read, is that upon those terms he would accept the office, and he would, then, that offer being made of a controllership with a seat in the cabinet, I should have expressed surprise that men were so biased and led away by a desire to defeat a member of the cabinet, that I should not have known that he could be entertained as to the intentions of the government on that question? The hon. gentleman may hold a different opinion of public men from what I may think, but he may think that a man made from one public man to another, or by the premier of the country to a representative to join his cabinet, and that he really does not mean what he says, that was merely done to influence, as the hon. gentleman intimated, the election which was going on. There was no election going on when I made that offer. How, then, could the telegram be intended to influence an election? Wait at all marvellous that Col. Prior's friends should become uneasy when they heard the statements made by the hon. Senator and others, that the Colonel had no right to a seat in the cabinet, and that it was never intended that he should occupy such a position? Was there any impropriety, under the circumstances, in Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney's telegraphing to me as the head of the Dominion Government, of what the actual position of affairs was? I leave it to the common sense of this house and of the country at large to reply. It was not until doubts had been thrown upon the honest intention of the government that these telegrams were despatched. Even in the face of the messages themselves, some persons had so little faith in the truthfulness of the men at the head of affairs that they would not believe that Col. Prior was a member of the government in the same way that all other ministers are. Even to-day, when Col. Prior is sitting at the head of the government, and the question brought before it whether it be one of trade policy or of a fast line, or cable, by which the different outlying portions of the empire may be connected with this country and with England—the hon. gentleman throws

doubt on the position which Col. Prior holds. But that gentleman has the imprimatur of the Governor-General's sanction upon his official acts; and I may say that the advice which Col. Prior's experience enables him to give in relation to matters of this kind, which are occupying so much attention at the present time, is of inestimable value to the country. The hon. gentleman claims, nevertheless, that Col. Prior's elevation to his present position is contrary to the law, but in that law from which he reads there is not to be found one single sentence which gives any color to his statement. I advise the hon. gentleman when he undertakes in future to deal with questions affecting the interests of his province, not to allow his partisanship to carry him away so as to deprive him of the common sense and judgment which he displays on ordinary occasions. It is true that Col. Prior's majority was largely reduced, but that was for two reasons, first the persistence with which the hon. gentleman and some others circulated the rumor that Col. Prior was not a member of the cabinet minister, and second, the hon. gentleman's action in introducing the question of the Manitoba schools. The hon. gentleman in his speech the other day referred repeatedly to the action of the government as being coercive and as indicating a determination to interfere with the province. I will quote his own words:

But there is another question to be considered, and it is also brought before us through the action of the government. The position of this country in the production of gold, silver, copper, lead, coal, and iron are simply fabulous. Mine owners are the last people in the world to object to an equitable tax on mines. They receive the protection of the law, and the government, and they gladly pay for it. But, like all others, they naturally object to taxation which mars their enterprise and does them injustice. A producing mine rapidly creates taxable property. It must have ore bins, tramways, boiler houses, pumps, hoisting machinery, air compressors, boarding houses and offices. A group of producing mines will create a town in an inconceivably short time. When I went to Trail Creek, two years ago, there were two log cabins there. To-day the young and vigorous town of Roseland is a busy centre of life and activity in the same spot. It has nearly three thousand people, and it has already its light and water plant and two railroads are building into it. Producing mines have made it, and they have enriched the province. Any legislation that will foster and promote mining development in British Columbia is certain to build up other such towns, and that will increase the resources of the government. But if you unduly burden development by taxing mines in their infancy and before they have become profitable producers you will infallibly hurt and not promote the mineral development of the country. My associates and I spent \$25,000 developing the Wonderful group in the Stocan. The ore we took out realized \$57,000. I would be manifestly unjust to levy a tax on that \$7,000 worth of ore. That would be merely piling on the agony. We spent \$4,000 on the Reed and Robinson and the ore we sold for \$5,000. In such cases the mine operator needs sympathy and not punishment. The wage earner has been paid; duty has been done; the mine owner is the sole loser. Surely his losses should not be increased.

"Taxation of infant mines would be most impolitic. It would tend to drive the prospector to stay development except the mere perfunctory assessment work which the law demands. There are thousands of prospects in the Kootenay which need smelter and milling plants to show their value, and the owners should be encouraged and not deterred from shipping their ore and finding its value."

"The only wise and just course to adopt if a special tax on mining is necessary for the support of the government, is a tax on the net profits of a producing mine. Moreover, that tax ought not to be excessive, for no industry should be taxed excessively. Two per cent. is really an excessive tax, for at that mining enterprise and industry would be taxed out of all proportion to other pursuits and enterprise. Last year the Trail district contributed over \$24,000 from this mine recorder's office to the provincial government; in addition all improved property contributed a due proportion. A tax of 2 per cent. of the ore product would have added \$20,000 more. This year a 2 per cent. tax would add \$20,000 more. That would make the Roseland mining district alone contribute 10 per cent. of the revenue of the province while its population is not more than 5 per cent. A tax of 1 per cent. on the net profits of the mines of the Kootenay will yield, this year, a handsome revenue, and next year will more than double itself."

"It has been suggested that the net profits are difficult to obtain. But the smelter returns are very easily obtained, and so are the wages of labor. The difference between the two is the net profit, and there is after all no difficulty to be found here."

The injustice of a tax of two per cent. on the gross output of the mine is best illustrated by a few figures which I will give you," continued Mr. Finch. "Many of the properties in the Trail Creek district are low grade, having a value of say \$20 per ton gross. There are, of course, some properties where ore is found having a gross value of from \$30 to \$75 per ton; but the great wealth of the camp, the great employment of labor, the creation of other taxable property will be made in the development of the vast low grade properties. The cost of mining, freight and treatment is the same with both properties, and averages from \$16 to \$17.50 per ton. With the completion of the railroads now building into the camp and the treatment of the ore on the ground, this cost will be materially reduced. Now a tax of 2 per cent. on the gross value of \$20 per ton, deducting \$17.50 (the cost of production), equals a tax of 17 per cent. on the net product, while the man who is fortunate enough to have a vein of \$40 ore would pay only 3½ per cent. on the net. In other words, the former case the man who mined 25,000 tons of \$20 ore would pay out in taxes, labor, etc., \$44,750, in taxes \$8,312.50, making a net profit of \$16,237.50, while the other miner would mine 12,500 tons of ore only, he would pay in taxes \$10,000, his labor bill would be only \$22,750 per annum, and his net profit \$39,250. If the tax instead of being 2 per cent. on the gross, were 2 per cent.

Highest of all in Leavening Power.—Latest U. S. Gov't Report

Royal Baking Powder

ABSOLUTELY PURE

TAXATION ON MINING.

Great interest has been created by the proposal of the government to levy a new tax of 2 per cent. on the gross value of the mineral product of the province. Our representative had an interview with Mr. John A. Finch on the subject yesterday. Mr. Finch is well known as one of the most successful and enterprising of the mining men of the West, and his high character for integrity and great business capacity entitles his views to great consideration.

"I think," said Mr. Finch, "that I express the views of the mining men of Kootenay when I say that we all feel deeply grateful to the government of the province for its just and liberal legislation in favor of the prospector and for its fostering care of the mineral development of the country. The government in this respect has done well and wisely, for nothing increases the wealth of a country so rapidly as mining. The possibilities of this country in the production of gold, silver, copper, lead, coal, and iron are simply fabulous. Mine owners are the last people in the world to object to an equitable tax on mines. They receive the protection of the law, and the government, and they gladly pay for it. But, like all others, they naturally object to taxation which mars their enterprise and does them injustice."

A producing mine rapidly creates taxable property. It must have ore bins, tramways, boiler houses, pumps, hoisting machinery, air compressors, boarding houses and offices. A group of producing mines will create a town in an inconceivably short time. When I went to Trail Creek, two years ago, there were two log cabins there. To-day the young and vigorous town of Roseland is a busy centre of life and activity in the same spot. It has nearly three thousand people, and it has already its light and water plant and two railroads are building into it. Producing mines have made it, and they have enriched the province. Any legislation that will foster and promote mining development in British Columbia is certain to build up other such towns, and that will increase the resources of the government. But if you unduly burden development by taxing mines in their infancy and before they have become profitable producers you will infallibly hurt and not promote the mineral development of the country. My associates and I spent \$25,000 developing the Wonderful group in the Stocan. The ore we took out realized \$57,000. I would be manifestly unjust to levy a tax on that \$7,000 worth of ore. That would be merely piling on the agony. We spent \$4,000 on the Reed and Robinson and the ore we sold for \$5,000. In such cases the mine operator needs sympathy and not punishment. The wage earner has been paid; duty has been done; the mine owner is the sole loser. Surely his losses should not be increased."

"Taxation of infant mines would be most impolitic. It would tend to drive the prospector to stay development except the mere perfunctory assessment work which the law demands. There are thousands of prospects in the Kootenay which need smelter and milling plants to show their value, and the owners should be encouraged and not deterred from shipping their ore and finding its value."

"The only wise and just course to adopt if a special tax on mining is necessary for the support of the government, is a tax on the net profits of a producing mine. Moreover, that tax ought not to be excessive, for no industry should be taxed excessively. Two per cent. is really an excessive tax, for at that mining enterprise and industry would be taxed out of all proportion to other pursuits and enterprise. Last year the Trail district contributed over \$24,000 from this mine recorder's office to the provincial government; in addition all improved property contributed a due proportion. A tax of 2 per cent. of the ore product would have added \$20,000 more. This year a 2 per cent. tax would add \$20,000 more. That would make the Roseland mining district alone contribute 10 per cent. of the revenue of the province while its population is not more than 5 per cent. A tax of 1 per cent. on the net profits of the mines of the Kootenay will yield, this year, a handsome revenue, and next year will more than double itself."

"It has been suggested that the net profits are difficult to obtain. But the smelter returns are very easily obtained, and so are the wages of labor. The difference between the two is the net profit, and there is after all no difficulty to be found here."

The injustice of a tax of two per cent. on the gross output of the mine is best illustrated by a few figures which I will give you," continued Mr. Finch. "Many of the properties in the Trail Creek district are low grade, having a value of say \$20 per ton gross. There are, of course, some properties where ore is found having a gross value of from \$30 to \$75 per ton; but the great wealth of the camp, the great employment of labor, the creation of other taxable property will be made in the development of the vast low grade properties. The cost of mining, freight and treatment is the same with both properties, and averages from \$16 to \$17.50 per ton. With the completion of the railroads now building into the camp and the treatment of the ore on the ground, this cost will be materially reduced. Now a tax of 2 per cent. on the gross value of \$20 per ton, deducting \$17.50 (the cost of production), equals a tax of 17 per cent. on the net product, while the man who is fortunate enough to have a vein of \$40 ore would pay only 3½ per cent. on the net. In other words, the former case the man who mined 25,000 tons of \$20 ore would pay out in taxes, labor, etc., \$44,750, in taxes \$8,312.50, making a net profit of \$16,237.50, while the other miner would mine 12,500 tons of ore only, he would pay in taxes \$10,000, his labor bill would be only \$22,750 per annum, and his net profit \$39,250. If the tax instead of being 2 per cent. on the gross, were 2 per cent.

on the net, the former miner would pay \$1,050 per annum in taxation, while the latter would be called upon to pay \$5,225. A tax of 1 per cent. on the net output of the mine, in addition to the ordinary taxation on improvements, will produce a very large amount of money as time rolls on."

THE CITY.

ARSWOTT Hewton and Miss Ada C. Lowry were united in marriage by the Rev. L. N. Tucker in Vancouver on Saturday.

ON THURSDAY evening the directors of the British Columbia Agricultural and Industrial Association met at the city hall to make preliminary arrangements for the exhibition of 1896.

The funeral of the late John Van Treight, who died on Tuesday afternoon, eldest son of the late George Van Treight of Tremont, Meath County, Ireland, took place from the family residence at Gordon Head yesterday at 2 p. m. The pallbearers were Messrs. S. Phipps, J. S. Yates, J. J. Austin, C. D. Mason, W. J. Paddon and C. C. King. A large assembly of the residents of the district attended.

MR. SWORN gives notice of motion for a return showing the grounds of appeal by the Bank of British Columbia against the assessment of the province against the provincial assessor; any report or judgment on such appeal by Mr. Mills, who acted as a court of revision, and the reasons on which the Finance Minister acted in withdrawing the claim of the province.

SEVENTY-FIVE second vice-presidents of the Northwestern Mining Associations attended a conference in Spokane last Saturday, representative mining men being in attendance from Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and British Columbia. Two important suggestions were endorsed by the convention, one for a secretary of mines, to be a member of the cabinet, the other directing the preparation of a bill providing for parallel end lines in the location of mining claims, this bill to be laid before other mining legislation.

WHILE sitting quietly in her chair, about five o'clock yesterday afternoon, Mrs. Harrison, wife of ex-Alderman B. Harrison, died very suddenly of heart disease. Dr. Milne was called in immediately but the attack had been so sudden that medical aid was of no avail. Mrs. Harrison had long been a resident of Victoria and had many friends. She was a prominent member of the Presbyterian church. The deceased lady was a native of Dumfriesshire, Scotland, and was 63 years of age. The funeral will take place to-morrow, at 2 o'clock, from the family residence, 42 Montreal street, and from St. Andrew's church half an hour later.

The Natural History Society had a well attended meeting last night at which proposed changes to the game act were discussed, and as a result the government will be asked to accept several suggestions to be embodied in the bill before it is presented to the house. One of these recommendations is that the sale or purchase of mounted heads and horns of big game be prohibited, and that the sale of willow grouse be also prohibited. Another suggestion is to do away with the clause prohibiting the shooting of ducks between sunset and sunrise during the open season. The meeting approved of the recommendation of the Vancouver Island Fish and Game Protection Society to make the close season for grouse from January 2 to August 2. The meeting also adopted a suggestion that the game act should not apply to Indians killing game for their own immediate use for food only. The prohibiting of anyone having game in their possession during the close season will be asked for.

THE probate of the will of Dr. Rev. Dr. George Hills, late vicar of Farham, Suffolk, and formerly Bishop of Lumbia, shows the estate to be valued at £17,851 12s. 7d. To his nephew, Geo. H. B. McSwiney, of Brighton, and to Arthur C. Hammersley, of London, is bequeathed the sum of £50 each; to Bent McSwiney, £500; to the testator's sister, Diana Phillips, £1,000; to his sister Caroline Arden, £50 and the income of £1,000 during her life; subject to the trusts of a sum to be in trust for her sons Frederick and W. D. McSwiney, to each of whom is also bequeathed £500; in trust for the late Mrs. Hills' niece, Justine King, £3,000, or in the event of her death whilst under the age of twenty-one, this sum to go to her two sisters; to Rev. W. H. P. Arden, £4,000, and the reversion on the death of his mother to £1,000; to Mrs. Harriet Arden, £5,000; to Rev. George A. Nichols and Mrs. Fanny Nichols, £500 each; to Robert Nixon, to Mrs. Scriven, and to Mrs. Blackstock, of Victoria, £1,000 each; to his nephew, George E. Arden, £1,000; and to his nieces, Mary Fre and Katherine Bulkley, £500 each. The residue is left in trust in equal shares to Rev. W. H. P. Arden, Mrs. Harriet Arden and George Herbert Bent McSwiney.

Truly The Detroit Free Press is a comic paper. In an editorial article it characterizes the view of the Venezuelan affair taken in the Queen's speech as broad and statesmanlike, and then says the speech is a pretty severe rap at Lord Salisbury. Poor Lord Salisbury! One would really have thought he was too astute to severely rap himself, but then in another article, The Free Press tells us his is on the wane, and his brains, too, might have added, seeing that in the opinion of the same paper he is "halting, undecided and churlish." And at the same time "broad, statesmanlike and benign." In penning this I am really not exaggerating one bit. The trouble with The Detroit Free Press is that it does not know who is responsible for the Queen's speech—that, like many others of its contemporary, it seeks to instruct without knowledge.

POLICE OFFICERS

Petition to the C. Strong Reasons A. Proposed Red

Fire Wardens Against Charges—Sewerage—The Aldermen's

Last evening's regular city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken

city council was broken territory council was broken territory council was broken

territory council was broken city council was broken city council was broken