

THE OWL.
AN
**INDEPENDENT ILLUSTRATED
JOURNAL.**

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"The darker the night the better I see,"
Says the shrewd old OWL in the sycamore tree.

HOOTS.

THE OWL makes its initial bow as a candidate for public favor. Its claims to such favor are briefly stated thusly: THE OWL will be independent, outspoken, fearless and honest. It will call a spade "a spade" and not "a horticultural implement." Wherever "crookedness" appears in politics, business or elsewhere, it will either straighten the bend or break the crook. Wherever it finds a case of caput inflatum, it will, after the laudable fashion of Paddy Whack, at Donnybrook, hit that head, and hit it hard. It will, in short, do all it can to promote good, equitable government in the Dominion, the Province and the City, to secure a fair deal for everyone, to further the promotion of the true interests of the Province at large, oppose all sectionalism wherever found, expose all "boodlers," whether operating on a large or small scale, and generally strike for the grand English principle of "fair play and no favor." The Bird, consequently, has every confidence that a liberal patronage will be bestowed upon it on every Monday, when it will greet the public with its mat-hoot-mal utterances.

Of course, the very first and most important matter for THE OWL to take up is the trouble which, though long existing, has only recently come to a head, between the Mainland of British Columbia and the adjoining island of Vancouver. On this subject THE OWL holds very decided opinions and proposes to set them forth as fully as the limited space at its disposal will admit of, and as emphatically as plain English can do it. There will be no mincing matters and no straddling of the fence with us. We are on the Mainland side of the fence in this matter, and will take care that every reader of this paper shall know it.

It were superfluous to rehearse at any length the particulars of the manner in which the wrongs, under which the Mainland has so long, and, withal, so patiently suffered at the hands of the city of Victoria, have grown and culminated until it has become clear to all that patience, on the part of the aggrieved one, must cease to be regarded as a virtue, and organized and resolute resistance be considered a positive duty which it were criminal to shirk.

It may not be out of place, however, to outline briefly what the grievance is, in what way its removal is sought to be effected, and what the Government has—or, rather, has

not—done to remedy the evil and render justice to those who have so long been iniquitously dealt with.

By the concession of every sensible man who is honest enough and free enough from abject partizanship, to give his candid opinion on the subject, the Mainland is not only now, but has been for years, inadequately represented in the Legislature. The time is so long past as to have become almost prehistoric, when the Island was dominant, because the most populous portion of the Province, and the opinion that it was high time that a fairer system of representation should be adopted rapidly ripened into a conviction so strong that the late Premier felt compelled to promise that a bill to accomplish that object would be introduced. Unfortunately, he died before his promise could be fulfilled, as it most unquestionably would have been had he lived.

Then Hon Theodore Davie took the reins of government and, when his ministry, by the mouth of the Lieutenant-Governor, made its bow to the people of the Province, one of the promises made was that an equitable Redistribution Bill would be introduced during the session then opened. That promise was reiterated by the Premier himself afterwards and the public accepted the pledges thus given as being bona fide. How egregiously they were fooled not only the whole Province but the whole Dominion now knows.

When the appropriation of \$300,000 for the erection of new Government buildings in Victoria had been secured, by the vote, be it observed, of a majority of members who represented a decided minority of the voters of the Province, the smart Premier dropped the mask, suavely told the members that, owing to the fact that the figures furnished by the Dominion Government, as representing the population of the Province, were evidently wrong, it was deemed better not to move in the matter of redistribution until the error was corrected.

Could there possibly be imagined a more diaphanous dodge? The excuse—which is, by the way as old as Balaclava—that "some one had blundered" was surely a poor one to justify the continuance of a gross and palpable wrong to the majority of the people of the Province. And Premier Davie, having no better excuse at hand, was compelled to adopt it, but it is hardly conceivable that he expected the people to believe it. We commend to his consideration the famous saying of Abraham Lincoln: "You can fool some people all the time; you can fool all the people sometimes; but you can't fool all the people all the time."

The blunder was, no doubt, made by the officials in Ottawa by their mixing up the reports of the Indian Department and the Census Commissioners—two documents which presented the results of calculations made by entirely different methods and for entirely different objects. The enumerators, moreover, of the census made no distinction between Indians and the white natives of British Columbia both being included under the same heading. Hence the mistake was easily made by officials at such a distance from the Province as Ottawa is, and so utterly unfamiliar with the facts as they necessarily were and are. But were the members of the Davie Government ignorant of the fact that, by the inclusion of the native white population with the Indians, a most unfair showing was made of the real numbers of the white population, especially of the Mainland? Did they not know, as well as every resident of the Province, that these figures, as given were absolutely erroneous and misleading, and had no bearing of any value whatever on the necessity of a redistribution measure being enacted? Had they not the result of the