

A POLITICAL REVIEW.

The Conditions which Entered Into the Administration of the Affairs of the Province.

Effect upon the Development during Recent Years
—True Standard of Success.

No. 1.

In reviewing the policy of a government extending over a period of years, we must take into account all the conditions which have effected the country during such time. The success or failure of an administration must be judged not so much according to any fixed standard of policy, as according to the degree of conformity with conditions as they present themselves.

Systems everywhere depend upon the individual character and ability of men entrusted with their carrying out. This has been strikingly illustrated so often in history that examples are unnecessary. If we take, for instance, the relations of France and Great Britain with their American colonies, extending over a period during which New France and New England formed the major divisions of the North American continent, we find that events shaped themselves very largely as the home authorities understood and acted upon Colonial needs. Under the enlightened policy of Colbert, New France grew and prospered. When the fatuous influence of Madame Pompadour ruled the French Court, it furnished instead of flourishing. The wise and vigorous policy of

Pitt strengthened and extended British power in America, while the "crass" policy of North proved as disastrous as the administration of Pitt had been successful.

The secret of success in every instance was the adaptation of policy to the demands of the times as conditions were developed and were varied.

Coming to British Columbia, the history of the Province since confederation is divided into two distinct periods, the one prior and the other subsequent to the construction of the C.P.R. The former period was governed by conditions materially different from those existing now. Without railway communication progress was necessarily very slow, and Government was confined to a narrow groove. In a long wait for the anticipated new order of things it settled down to one main consideration, viz: the equilibrium of revenue and expenditure. With a limited population and limited trade and industry, revenue depended to a large extent upon Dominion subsidies and land sales. Out of this state of affairs grew the British Columbia land policy, or in other words, the selling of lands in large tracts. For this "evil," the Government as a whole, dating it back to