LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Women's Right to the Franchise—Back Street No Place for London Agency.

Cariboo District Complains of Neglect—Toll Roads Policy Discussed.

Loan of Three Millions Authorized—Prorogation on Monday Afternoon.

THURSDAY EVENING'S SESSION.

Hon. Mr. Semlin introduced the following bills, brought down by message:

The Public Dyking Act Amendment Bill.

Construction of Roads and Collection of Tolls Bill.

Subsidy to Midway & Penticton Railway Bill.

The message and the bills accompanying were ordered to be considered at the next sitting of the house.

Hon. Mr. Cotton presented a message from His Honor, recommending the bill authorizing the borrowing of $2,800,000; this bill also will be considered to-morrow.

TIMBER LANDS.

Mr. Wells asked the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works:

"1. Up to what date were sales of timber lands made at an upset price of $2.50 per acre or less?

"2. How many acres were disposed of?

"3. Are these lands now assessed, or do they otherwise contribute to the revenue of the province?

"4. What quantity of timber was cut under license during the year ending 30th June, 1898?

"5. What was the amount of royalty dues collected upon timber sales and the rebate allowance made for the year ending 30th June, 1898?

"6. Are all existing licenses subject to the same ground rent, or are there any exempt from it?

"7. What quantity of timber lands were sold to Wright & Ainsworth in settlement of the 'wagon road land grant,' and are there lands now subject to royalty dues? If not, how do they contribute to the revenue of the province?

"8. Is timber or logs cut under license or otherwise upon lands not surveyed; such surveys, if any, being co-affirmed by the department?"

Hon. Mr. Semlin replied: (1) The sale of agricultural and timber lands at $1.00 per acre was discontinued on the 16th February, 1884, and at $2.50 per acre on the 20th April, 1891. (2) It is not possible to give the number of acres of timber lands sold, as no distinction was made in the land act between agricultural and timber lands. (3) The lands are assessed and taxes collected. (4) The returns are made for the calendar year. During the year ending 31st December, 1897, there was cut on Crown lands 61,961,647 feet. During the eleven months ending 30th November, 1898, there was cut on Crown lands 70,755,866 feet. (5) The returns are made for the calendar year. The amount of royalty payable on timber and cordwood cut during the year ending 31st December, 1897, is given at $62,842.22. The estimated amount of rebate on exportation is given at $17,358.57. The amount of royalty payable on timber and cordwood during the eleven months ending 30th November, 1896, is given at $68,357.44. The estimated amount of rebate on exportation is given at $18,775.54. (6) The holders of special timber cutting license do not pay ground rent, but an annual fee of fifty dollars is charged for the license, and a royalty of fifty cents per thousand feet is collected on timber cut and removed from off the timber limit. An annual fee of $10 is charged for hand loggers' license. (7)—(a) Warrants for 60,000 acres of land in Yale and Kootenay districts were granted to George Ainsworth under authority of the Eagle Pass Wagon Road Act, 1883; (b) no distinction was made between the different kinds of lands; (c) timber on the lands acquired by warrant is not subject to payment of a royalty; (d) by taxation. (8) The holder of a special license may cut and remove timber and logs from off unsurveyed Crown lands, the boundaries of such unsurveyed tracts of land, however, being described in the license. The holder of a hand logger's license may cut and remove timber off any vacant or unsurveyed Crown lands, but leases of timber lands are not granted until after the lands shall have been surveyed and the surveys accepted by the department.

VICTORIA'S CONTRIBUTION.

Mr. Kellie asked the Honorable Chief Commissioner:

"1. What amount of revenue has Victoria contributed for five years ending June 30th, 1898?

"2. What amount has been expended in Victoria on parliament buildings and grounds during the same period?

"3. Amount paid in salaries for five years ending June 30th, 1898?

"4. Hospital grant for five years ending June 30th, 1898?

"5. Other public works and expenditures for five years ending June 30th, 1898?

"6. School grants for five years ending June 30th, 1898?

"7. What amount of revenue has Vancouver contributed for five years ending June 30th, 1898?

"8 Amount expended on public works during same period?

"9. Amount of salaries paid for five years ending June 30th, 1898?

"10. Hospital grants for five years ending June 30th, 1898?

"11. School grants for five years ending June 30th, 1898?

"12. What approximate amount of revenue credited to Victoria is contributed by outlying districts."

Hon. Mr. Semlin replied: (1) $444,797. (2) $887,762. (3) Provincial departments, $493,345; local offices and institutions, $170,953. (4) $50,000. (5) Public works, $20,013. (6) $89,253. (7) $152,902. (8) Public works, $44,060. (9) $89,993. (10) $25,000. (11) $85,089. (12) Approximately $100,000. In explanation of No. 12, the only revenue affected is registry fees, of which during the five years the total amount accounted for through the Victoria office is $159,075, as against $42,947 from the Vancouver office. Both offices have a proportionate sum included in returns which cannot be considered as local revenue.

REMISSION OF TAXES.

Mr. Macpherson asked the Premier:

"1. In how many instances have taxes or rentals been remitted, in whole or in part, since 1890?

"2. Give the names of parties receiving remittance of taxes or rents.

"3. The amounts remitted in each case, and the dates of such remittance.

"4. Under what authority were such remittals made?

Hon. Mr. Semlin replied: (1) Two. (2) The Davies-Sayward Mill & Land Co. and the Toronto & British Columbia Lumber Co. (3) In the first case $1,945.70, on the 16th August; and in the other $15,303.85, on the 8th June, 1898. (4) Section 47 of the revenue act.

THE BIGGS CASE.

Mr. R. Smith asked the Attorney-General:

"1. Has the case of John Biggs, of Nanaimo, been brought to the attention of the Hon. Minister?

"2. Will the Hon. Minister look into the matter and say, at any time, what the government can and will do in the matter?

Hon. Mr. Martin replied: (1) Yes. (2) From what has been laid before me I cannot see that Mr. Biggs has any case that can be profitably dealt with by the government or by the house.

E. & N. BELT.

Mr. R. Smith asked the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works:

"1. Has the provincial government received the results of the Dominion commission to inquire into the rights of original settlers within the E. & N. railway belt?

"2. Is it the intention of the provincial government to give an opinion on this inquiry, as to the position of their government in relation to the same?"

Hon. Mr. Semlin answered: (1) Yes; (2) the government has not yet fully considered the matter.

WOMAN AND THE FRANCHISE.

Mr. Ralph Smith moved the second reading of the bill to extend the franchise to women. In looking over the proceedings of the house he found that this subject had been before the assembly three or four times during previous sessions, and had usually not been considered with the amount of seriousness which such a measure deserved. The last time the measure was before the house one of the members had undertaken to make a comparison between the weight of the brain of an average woman and of an average man. He believed, however, that it would be difficult to prove there was a greater difference between the brain of man and woman than there was between the brains of some men and of others. He could not accept that comparison as an argument against the bill, but took it rather as an indication that the bill had not been considered with the seriousness which is merited. In discussing this matter he had reached the conclusion from the only objections he had heard to the enfranchisement of women that the argument against has been based purely upon sentiment. The main objection was founded upon the ancient prejudice that woman should be kept subservient to man. That was the belief prevailing in China and among the aboriginal peoples of this country. But in advanced civilization their rights, duties and responsibilities in active life were being continually extended. He pointed out that the majority of the school teachers of the province are women, fully 90 per cent., and it had been stipulated that in the examination as to fitness for that position a young woman could take a certificate for efficiency at the age of eighteen, while a man must wait until he reaches the maturer age of twenty-one. When a woman had all the duties of life to perform she should enjoy the rights attaching, and governments had no right to determine, without regard to her, the state of the law under which she should suffer. Every one does not want political power for the sake of governing, but every one did want political power to save himself or herself. The objection to legislation of this nature had been that if woman secured the franchise she would vote as her husband voted or her sweetheart voted, but if the man who raised that objection had said that the men would be likely to vote as the women voted he would have been more nearly speaking the truth. Of the men who enjoyed the franchise there were 90 per cent. who were "hewers of wood and drawers of water;" men who were dependent upon their masters and employers, and he submitted that the conditions under which men had been held had not been conducive to the belief in the first instance that they would be more capable of exercising the franchise wisely than a woman is supposed to be able to do-day. He admitted that there was a time in the history of the franchise when the tendency was for the vote of working men to be interfered with by those because of the dependent position of the employers. If the same objection had been allowed to prevail it would have meant that the householders in England would never have been enfranchised to-day and by the proportion of the liberty extended to the men had been able to secure for themselves greater independence, and the greater the privilege they enjoy in this direction the nearer they approached to a state of actual independence. So with the woman. The exercise of her political right would tend to benefit the man and the woman. Then, it was asked, what did a woman know about politics? It was surely a poor argument after having kept her from the enjoyment of political rights to blame her because she did not know how to use them. He was sorry because of the position some of his friends were taking in this matter. He was sorry that he had not the president of the council with him, and wished to remind that gentleman that as the house is going to determine this matter in the right way, the next time he went to Nanaimo he would be looking for the franchise of these individuals—the women as well as the men—and he would have mighty little chance of a successful candidature if he ever voted against this bill. There were thousands of women in this province over twenty-one years of age. (Cries of No, no.)

Mr. Henderson rose to a point of order. He did not believe there was a single lady in this province over the age of twenty-one years.

Mr. Smith—Well, then, there are thousands of women in the province who have been here twelve months.

This was in regard to the qualification required from voters of the male sex. He continued that it would be noticed he had safeguarded the act so that ladies should not be able to sit on the floor of the house. (Cries of Shame, shame.) He had done this, not because he thought the ladies would not be just as creditable to the house as the gentlemen, but because he was afraid without it the pill would have been a little hard to swallow.

Hon. Mr. Semlin said that as often as he had listened to addresses on the subject during the number of years he had sat in the house, this one was certainly the most enjoyable of them all. He believed the matter worthy of serious consideration. He supposed his sentiments were well known, because as often as this measure had been introduced it had received such support as he could give it. On this occasion he was in full sympathy with the mover, but would ask the hon. member to consider the condition of the house, and withdraw the bill until at least next session. There was no sign of a general election, and it was a well recognized rule in the Old Country that no large addition to the franchise should be made without those who are thus added being permitted to exercise the rights of exercising the franchise at a general election immediately afterwards.

Mr. Smith asked if he was to understand that the government would take the matter up and make themselves responsible for it at the next session of the legislature.

Mr. Semlin—Oh, no.

Mr. Helmcken said that the greater portion of his existence in the house had been spent in the endeavor to drive home to the honorable gentlemen that the franchise should be extended to his friends, the women.

Capt. Irving moved the previous question, which was carried, and the second reading of the bill was defeated by a vote of 17 to 15, the following being the division:

For Messrs. Robertson, Baker, Ellison, Helmcken, Joe. Martin, Semlin, Macpherson, R. Smith, Deane, Kelse, Kidd, Helgesen, Munroe, Neill and Henderson—15.

Against—Messrs. Hall, Clifford, McBride, Eberts, A. W. Smith, Bryden, McPhillips, Irving, Cotton, Higgins, J. M. Martin, Tisdall, Hume, McKechnie, Kinchant, Green and Wells—17.

Mr. Hall subsequently explained that when voting for the previous question he had thought he was voting for the second reading. Had he voted as he intended to the result would have been a tie, and the ladies of British Columbia would have been entitled to the franchise on the casting vote of Mr. Speaker.

REPLEVIN BILL.

The Replevin bill was committed, reported complete with amendments, and read a third time and passed.

RAILWAY SUBSIDY BILL.

The adjourned debate on this bill was resumed.

Mr. McPhillips felt no surprise at the introduction of this legislation, as it was passable with the other legislation of the present government. He condemned the principle which the bill enunciated—the repudiation of contracts entered into by the government of British Columbia, and moved in amendment "that this house cannot approve of a bill which involves the repudiation of agreements solemnly entered into by the Crown with any of her subjects."

Mr. Higgins could no see anything in the bill to which the word repudiation applied. In the correspondence there was a contract which should have been completed within a certain time; that contract had not been executed. The work of surveys could not be included under the head of construction. He had opposed the Victoria, Vancouver & Eastern railway when it was first mooted, not only here, but at Trail and at other places in the Kootenay. He believed Mackenzie & Mann to be the most responsible contractors in the Dominion and that they intended at first to do what was expected of them. He appealed to the government to see to it that Messrs Mackenzie & Mann were fairly and even liberally dealt with in regard to any expenditure they might have made.

Col. Baker replied to some of the remarks made on the previous day by the finance minister, claiming that the late government had built 500 miles of railway, which had resulted in the development of the Kootenays. The present government at the rate they were going would take twenty years to do less work. The idea of there being millions of coal lands given away for the Crow's Nest Pass road was absurd. He counted the work he had done in bringing the Crow's Nest Pass road in the best piece of work in his life.

Mr. Ellison was sorry that any such legislation should have been brought forward. It would affect East Yale more than any other section of the province. The contract was in the hands of good people, and he felt that he could almost guarantee that they would build the road.

Mr. Helmcken, speaking to the amendment, again condemned the legislation proposed by the government, and the division being taken the amendment was defeated by 20 to 13, the second reading carrying on the same vote.

IN COMMITTEE.

The Prospecting for Minerals in Private Lands bill and the Supreme Court bill were passed through committee, the latter being so amended on motion of Mr. Macpherson as to make it optional for barristers to don the wig in any court of the province. The former bill led to an interesting question by Mr. Clifford, who asked whether the provisions extended to Indian reserves.

Hon. Mr. Martin was unable to answer, not having looked into the matter.

SECOND READINGS.

The second readings of the Trades licenses, the Liquor licenses bill, the Speedy Incorporation of Towns Amendment bill, and the finance minister's Placer Mining bill were all carried with practically no debate, and the house adjourned at 12:35.

"I move that this house in rising do stand adjourned until 2 o'clock to-day," said Hon. Mr. Semlin.

"Is it 2 o'clock this morning or 2 this afternoon?" inquired one honorable member with well feigned anxiety.

"I think it will be 2 this afternoon," answered the Premier, and then the house adjourned.

FRIDAY, February 24.

The Speaker took the chair at 2 o'clock and prayers were read by Rural Dean Barber.

THE LONDON OFFICE.

Mr. Turner moved, with Col. Baker as seconder, for a return of all correspondence between the government and the late Agent-General of the province, or any other party, in relation to the closing of the office in London, or the dismissal of the Agent-General. In support of his resolution, Mr. Turner contended that it would be interesting for the house to know the circumstances under which the government had acted in this matter, especially as the changes in the location of the office had been anything but in the interest of the province. He contended that the old locality was that in which the greatest good to the province could be secured—the locality in which all the more important colonies had their representatives. The present office was in an out-of-the-way locality for the purposes, and the £200 now proposed to be devoted to the office would be so much money wasted. He insisted that the office as formerly administered had been of the greatest benefit to British Columbia, especially in the attraction of capital in this direction, and instanced such men as Lord Strathcona as confirming this opinion. There was a very erroneous idea current in regard to this office, and he assured the house that the office as formerly directed was worth $20,000 to the province much more than as at present conducted it was worth $1,000. As now managed the office in London was a very good thing for the gentleman in charge but of no advantage to British Columbia.

Hon. Mr. Semlin had no objection to the presentation of the correspondence asked for, which was very brief indeed, but thought that the main desire of the leader of the opposition in bringing forward this resolution had not been to get the correspondence so much as to discuss the changes that had been made. He thought these changes had been most advantageous, the office having been brought into the business section out of the residential, as the gentlemen opposite had themselves suggested should be done.

Col. Baker thought that the old location of the office had been infinitely better for British Columbia, and also that the salary attached should have been commensurate with the importance of the office to the province and sufficient to enable the Agent-General to properly entertain those whose attention it was most desirable to attract toward British Columbia.

Mr. Henderson had a word to say in disparagement of the former conduct of the office in London, where he maintained commonest questions could not be satisfactorily disposed of by those in charge. For example one man that he had known of had gone to the office to ascertain the best method of reaching British Columbia, and after long consideration the clerk in charge had informed him that it would be better for him to go by boat. (Laughter.)

Major Kinchant, Mr. Deane and Hon. Mr. Cotton defended the present location and management of the Agent-General's office, and Mr. Turner closing the debate, the resolution was agreed to.

TORONTO & B. C. LUMBER CO.

Mr. Clifford moved, with Mr. McBride as seconder, that the vote of the house to receive the report of the special committee in the matter of the timber leases of the Toronto & British Columbia Lumber Company be rescinded, and the matter be referred back to the committee for re-consideration. The introducer of this resolution explained that he had had no opportunity of considering the report of this committee, of which he was a member, until after it had been completed, printed, and placed on his desk in the house. There were certain statements contained in this report that were at variance with the facts, while evidence had recently come into his possession that he desired to lay before the committee which would materially change the decision reached. There were also several witnesses who had come forward, and it was most essential to a fair understanding of the matters that the committee had been appointed to investigate, that these gentlemen should be heard.

Mr. Macpherson, as a member of the committee, objected to the re-opening of its work. He maintained that the member for Cassiar had had ample opportunity to attend the meetings of the committee and produce his evidence or his witnesses before.

Mr. Robertson, another member of the committee, urged the house to refer the report back to them. He knew that there were certain deductions and insinuations contained in the report that were not to be drawn from the evidence, and in view of this fact, and of the additional statement that there were other witnesses to be heard, he would vote for the resolution. The fact that the report had been presented cut and dried by the chairman of the committee, and the members had agreed to it without proper inquiry into the facts.

Col. Baker thought that the good sense and honesty of the house would lead them to accept the resolution. Surely no honorable member would desire to burk full and fair investigation.

Hon. Mr. Martin opposed the proposal It was now too late, he contended, to reopen the inquiry, on this the last day of the session.

Mr. Neill also vigorously opposed the re-opening of the inquiry, contending that the evidence and witnesses could have been brought forward before, and that the report contained no deductions but merely a presentment of successive facts that had been fully established by the evidence. He insisted that the report had not been objected to by the member for Cowichan, Mr. Robertson—who took issue at once with this statement—and held that he could almost guarantee that Mr. Clifford had been unable to attend the committee's meetings, as he was a declared independent member.

Dealing with this latter point, Mr Turner objected that this should be regarded as a political matter at all. The committee had been appointed to investigate certain matters, and because a member was independent that should not make his services any the less valuable. He commented strongly upon the government's desire to exclude evidence, and upon the fact of this report, prepared by the former bill led to an interesting question by Mr. Clifford, who asked whether the provisions extended to Indian reserves. Well, having been hurried through in the absence of Mr. Clifford, in the face of the fact that he had other and valuable evidence to offer on the subject dealt with.

Mr. Ralph Smith opposed the resolution, and after Mr. Clifford had expressed himself as opposed to the statement of the report in every way, the resolution was rejected on a party division of 19 to 14.

UNION SCHOOL BUILDING.

Mr. Ralph Smith asked: "At what date was the contract let for the last new school at Union? (2) What were the terms of the contract?"

Hon. Mr. Semlin replied:

"1. 29th August, 1898.

"2. To erect a building in accordance with plans and specifications for the sum of $4,750, and to complete the same by the 15th day of January, 1899."

MEASURES BY MESSAGE.

The message of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor transmitting bills to the following effect were considered with the bills, the latter being read a first time, and set for second reading in the evening: To borrow the sum of $2,800,000 for specific purposes; to grant a subsidy for a railway from Midway to Penticton; and to provide for the construction of roads and for the collection of certain tolls upon the same. The bill to amend the Public Dyking act having already been fully debated in the house, the Minister of Finance obtained consent to its second reading immediately, and this being carried the bill was ordered for committee in the evening.

SUPREME COURT ACT.

The bill amending the Supreme Court act was accepted as reported from the committee with amendments, and the bill passed its last reading.

C. P. N. CO.'S ACT.

Hon. Mr. Cotton introduced a bill to amend the Canadian Pacific Navigation Company's act, the bill being read a first time, and set for second reading to-morrow morning.

NATURALIZED ASIATICS.

Hon. Mr. Martin presented a return asked for in the resolution of Mr. Helgesen, of the number of Chinese and Japanese who have become subjects by naturalization in British Columbia up to the present time since 1863. This return was necessarily incomplete, as the Attorney-General said, and was obtained from Victoria, New Westminster, Nanaimo and Vancouver only—the complete information could not have been obtained prior to the closing of the session.

The number of Chinese is 689 and of Japanese 1,052.

RAILWAY SUBSIDIES REPEAL.

In committee, the bill to repeal certain railway subsidies was subjected to an important amendment by the Attorney-General, its provisions being made inapplicable to the Crow's Nest (for British Columbia Southern) road, and a section being added to the affect that the bill shall not operate against any rights possessed by Wm. Mackenzie or D. D. Mann to seek to recover damages arising out of any assumed breach of contract with the government of the province of British Columbia.

The bill was reported complete with these amendments, and set for second reading in the evening.

THE LAND BILL.

This measure, too, was passed through the committee stage, and will be taken up for final reading in the evening.

THE COMPANIES ACT.

In committee on the bill to amend this measure the following amendment was introduced, on the suggestion of Mr. Neill:

"Any officer, agent, or employee of an association, corporation, or company who shall, with fraudulent intent, withhold from the shareholders, or shall alter any written report furnished by the manager, engineer, or expert duly authorized to make such report, shall, on summary conviction, be liable to imprisonment not exceeding three month nor less than one month."

It was originally proposed that the penalty should be a fine of from $200 to $500 and imprisonment, but as the member for North Victoria pointed out that this would lead to disallowance—the Attorney-General supporting the contention—the fine provision was struck out.

Another amendment was introduced at the instance of Hon. Mr. Cotton, to the effect that mortgages securing debentures issued by companies incorporated under this act may be registered in the office of the Provincial Secretary, the fees for such registration being fixed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-council.

The bill was reported complete with amendments.

MUNICIPAL CLAUSES ACT.

The house went into committee on this bill, with Mr. Green as chairman.

Mr. Deane introduced an amendment proposing the elimination of the property qualification for mayor and aldermen.

Hon. Mr. Martin objected that this was a re-enunciation of the bill introduced by the member for North Yale, which had met defeat in the house.

Mr. Deane denied this. His bill had made the proposed change applicable only to towns incorporated since 1892—this made the matter general.

Col. Baker held that due notice should have been given of so important a change.

Mr. Kidd thought that the amendment involved too radical a change in principle to be dealt with at this late stage of the session.

Hon. Mr. Martin approved the principle enunciated in the amendment offered by Mr. Deane, but agreed with Mr. Kidd that it could not be considered thus late in the session.

The amendment was rejected, only Messrs. Deane and Macpherson voting "aye."

In view of the largely signed petition of Victoria property owners, protesting against the removal of special provision in the act prohibiting the city council from making expenditures or assessments beyond a certain limit without direct sanction of the ratepayers,

Mr. Hall moved that this be struck out, supporting his motion vigorously, and being followed by Mr. Higgins, Mr. Helmcken and Mr. Deane.

Hon. Mr. Martin argued that the council being the representatives of the people, Victoria's property owners had no right to complain. The law should be general and the section should stand.

On a vote being called the amendment of Mr. Hall was carried—Messrs. Hume, Higgins, Wells, Munro and J. M. Martin voting with the members of the opposition.

The committee then rose, reporting progress.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.

Just before Mr. Speaker saw 6 o'clock—which he was ten minutes late in doing,

Hon. Mr. Cotton presented a message from His Honor, transmitting the supplementary estimates, which it was ordered should go to committee of supply in the evening.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.

On the resumption of business in the evening, the house went at once into committee of supply, the deputy speaker, Mr. Higgins, in the chair. On the vote of $6,000 for a registry office at Nelson being reached,

Col. Baker wanted to know if this had anything to do with the recent election in Nelson? Had the placing of this sum on the supplementaries anything to do with the return of Hon. Mr. Hume?

The vote of another large sum for a bridge at Windermere, in East Kootenay, also excited the attention of the member for South East Kootenay, in view of the fact that a bye-election had also just been disposed of in the district.

Mr. Helgesen likewise had a word to say with regard to these votes. He had understood that there were to be no supplementary estimates, and was surprised to see these come down. He could not understand why Cariboo was left with large tracts in which not a single dollar of expenditure would be made, the neglect of the government for this old district being "simply dreadful." He did not think Cariboo should have been "sat on" for sending two supporters of the government to the house.

Col. Baker sympathized with the member for Cariboo, his own experience being similar, despite the fact that he had presented an immense petition for appropriations.

Mr. Ellison also thought that if there were any additional appropriations to be made, there was no district so deserving of them as East Yale. He thought that if the people wanted to get into Cranbrook (as suggested by the President of the Council), they might go round the Columbia, and allow the cost of this bridge, $3,500, to be spent where it was most needed, in East Yale.

Mr. Neill would cordially support the remarks of the last speaker if he would substitute Alberni for East Yale.

Mr. Kellie, Mr. Macpherson, Hon. Mr. Cotton and Mr. Green also spoke briefly with regard to appropriations, and the votes being reported to the house, were by the house adopted.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The bill to amend the Births, Deaths and Marriages act, being passed through committee, was read a third time and passed.

PUBLIC LOAN BILL.

Hon. Mr. Cotton, in moving the second reading of the bill to authorize a loan of $2,800,000 for specific purposes, explained in detail the object and scope of this measure, and outlined the changes in the financial policy of the government which had been instituted since the new administration took office. There would be a deficiency of from $1,700,000 to $1,800,000 to meet before June next, and the estimates provided for a loan of one and three quarter millions to make good the sums required. There was also $800,000 required to provide for the subsidy for the railway from Robson to Penticton. The loan here contemplated was not a new loan, but replaced the old loan that was repealed, under new conditions that the government regarded as more favorable to the province. It was provided that the balance of one and a quarter million remaining unexpended under the old act might be applied to the purposes of public works by the government, and under the present bill the government sought authority to have a certain required sum available for the purposes of public improvements where necessary. He did not know just what terms the new loan could be floated upon. The last loan had brought 91.68, and he hoped that an even better price would be got now. The governments of South Australia and Natal had recently got a fraction over 94 on their 3 per cent. inscribed stock. The bill provided for the necessary costs of negotiation of the loan, and would enable the government, if it found it expedient to do so, to expend money in such enterprises as the toll roads, with regard to which a bill had now been brought before the house. In two or three portions of the province—notably in the Omineca district—it appeared that such roads would be of the utmost advantage to the hydraulic mining enterprises and all residents of the district, and this bill would enable the government to construct them if it were deemed advisable. After briefly explaining the other various details of the bill, including that feature making it permissible to float the debentures at home, and that other feature looking to the issue at some future date of British Columbia treasury notes, the Finance Minister moved the second reading of the bill.

Col. Baker assured the Finance Minister that no obstruction would be offered to this bill from the other side of the house as it was in large measure to provide funds for the carrying out of the policy of development by public works that had been initiated and consistently pursued by the late government and which the present government now appeared to be coming to see was a necessity for the prosperity of British Columbia. He commented upon the effort of the government to cancel the arrangements made by their predecessors in order to get the spending of these funds in their own hands, and also dealt with the financial terms discussed by the minister. As to the floating of debentures at home, it had proved unsuccessful when tried before, but might possibly be successful now—if so, it was but another evidence of the success of the development policy under which the country had prospered during the past twelve years. The opposition of to-day were not obstructionists first, last and always, as their predecessors in opposition had been, and the government would find themselves ready always to support all measures looking to the development of the country in any way.

Mr. McPhillips devoted a few words to the fact that thus early in their existence the government appeared to have become convinced of the wisdom and the necessitiy of the policy of the past government.

Messrs. Deane, Hall and Henderson were heard from on the measure, which then passed its second reading, its committee stage, and its third reading.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC REGULATION BILL.

The bill to amend the Liquor Traffic Regulation act was up on second reading which was moved by Hon. Mr. Martin. Incidentally he explained that the present law was not what it should be, in that it gave the owner of a saloon or other similar property—an hotel—an unjustifiable interest in the license. He maintained that there should be no personal property in a saloon license, and that it should be altogether attached to the tenant, as otherwise he was at all times in the power of the landlord.

The bill passed its second reading, its committee, and its third reading.

SUCCESSION DUTY.

The bill to amend the Succession Duty act also passed its final reading.

ASSESSMENT ACT.

In committee on this measure Mr. Eberts again took occasion to emphasize his views with regard to the so-called abolition of the mortgage tax. It sounded very well to declare that this tax was abolished, but he still maintained that so long as a personal property tax was imposed, so long would those having money to lend, by increased interest or otherwise, compel the borrowers to pay. The abolition of the mortgage tax (so-called) was a trick to please the imagination of the people, while at the same time it was a direct and important advantage to the capitalist as against the poor man.

Debate followed, but the bill passed through committee with amendments and was read a third time and passed.

C. P. N. CO. BILL.

The bill to amend the C. P. N. Co. incorporation act was offered for second reading by Hon. Mr. Cotton, who explained that it had been necessitated by the fact that the bill of last year contained authority for the company to do business outside the province—this being objected to by the Dominion.

The second reading was agreed to, and the bill passed through committee and its third stage.

MINES, TOWNS AND REVENUE.

Mr. Hall took the chair for committee on the Metalliferous Mines act amendment bill, which was reported complete with amendments.

The Municipalities Incorporation act amendment bill, and the Speedy Incorporation of Towns act amendment bill also were reported complete.

The Revenue Tax act amendment bill and the Revenue act amendment bill passed through committee and also received their third reading.

CHINESE MINERS.

In committee on the Mineral act amendment bill, Mr. Helmcken being chairman,

Mr. Neill proposed an amendment stipulating that no Chinese or Japanese should be entitled to obtain a free miner's license unless naturalized British subjects, pointing out that this was distinctly in line with other provincial legislation.

Hon. Mr. Martin offered vigorous opposition, on the ground that the clause would not be workable, and at his suggestion the member for Alberni withdrew his amendment.

LAPSED LICENSES.

Mr. Neill thought that $25 was rather too much to compel a miner to pay for recovery of his rights under a lapsed license. He proposed in amendment $15.

Hon. Mr. Martin opposed the change, contending for what he termed "a reasonably heavy penalty," which he held could not be less than $25.

Mr. Helgesen had voted against the $25 in the mining committee, and he proposed to do so now.

Hon. Mr. Hume, from his own experience with miners and prospectors, had found all too few to whom $25 was not a large sum of money. He favored the $15 as quite enough.

The $15 carried.

Hon. Mr. Martin said that whatever might be said of the inability of the individual miner to pay $25, a similarly situated company should be able to pay $300, and he moved accordingly. There should be no excuse for the company.

This was agreed to.

Mr. Neill's proposal for metal plates on claim posts was lost.

The bill was reported complete with amendments.

TOLL ROADS PROPOSED.

It was twenty minutes to 1 when the Premier moved the second reading of the bill looking to the construction of toll roads through certain portions of the province.

Mr. McPhillips immediately moved the adjournment of the debate, and this was agreed to by the house.

PUBLIC DYKING BILL.

The second reading of this bill was moved by the Premier and agreed to.

PENTICTON RAILWAY BONUS.

Hon. Mr. Martin moved the second reading of the bill to grant a subsidy in aid of the Penticton-Midway railway, explaining that this measure merely continued the existing legislation, while separating it from the general act.

Mr. McPhillips could not see any reason why the bargain with the Penticton-Midway railway should be continued and the bargain with Mackenzie & Mann repudiated; or why this road should be deemed any more necessary than the other roads whose promised subsidies were cancelled by the repeal bill which passed its second reading on Thursday.

Mr. Booth thought the Attorney-General should have explained how it was expected that this road could be constructed, the company being debarred from receiving federal assistance, while cancelling the assistance given other roads on the ground that they could not be carried out on the provincial subsidies.

The second reading carried.

PROROGATION.

In moving the adjournment at 1:20 a. m. until 11 a. m. on Saturday, Hon. Mr. Semlin announced that the house would sit continuously from that hour until all business had been disposed of, and that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor would come down at 3 p. m. on Monday to dismiss the legislators from their labors.

Among the bills that are to be slaughtered are Mr. Clifford's Placer Mining bill and Mr. Kellie's Privileges of Parliament bill.

GALLERY NOTES.

The leader of the opposition, Mr. Turner, left for England this morning.

Mr. Henderson, of New Westminster, to-day enunciated the principle that a member of the house should not debate a bill unless he knew something of it. It was the first occasion on which Mr. Henderson had spoken on the second reading of a bill during the session.

When the question of the location of the London office of the province was under consideration, one honorable member was accused of ignorance of the geography of London, and it was suggested that he did not know where Finsbury Circus is. "Oh, yes, I do," he replied, "my father used to take me there when I was a boy to see the animals."

The correspondence just presented to the house in relation to the Quebec conference consisted of a letter from the Minister of Finance to Sir Wilfrid Laurier; and a minute-in-council approving of a full statement of British Columbia's interest being forwarded to Ottawa to be laid before the commission.

Death's Hand.—At 43 Putnam street yesterday morning there occurred the death of Walter Barry, a native of Victoria, aged 26 years. The funeral will take place on Monday morning from the R. C. cathedral. Dennis McFadden, an old miner, also died yesterday. He first came to British Columbia in 1858 and mined on the Fraser, in Cariboo, Cassiard and Omineca. For several years he had been cared for at St. Joseph's hospital by the Sisters of Ann. Deceased was 74 years of age and a native of Ireland.

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