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THE PREMIER AND THE MINING ASSOCIATION.

Premier Prior seems to be favorably disposed towards the Provincial Mining Association. He apparently appreciates the patriotism and public-spiritedness of those who are directing the affairs of the association and approves of the suggestions that have been made by that body to the government and legislation for the mineral industry of this province. But that is about as far as it goes. He has yet to manifest a really serious determination to back up his statements with deeds. The association wants from the Premier actions, not words. It may be that Colonel Prior is willing to act upon the suggestions of the association, but cannot do so for lack of support by his ministerial colleagues. It is an open secret that the Attorney-General and the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works are bent upon the pursuit of a policy of obstruction calculated to both stultify and annoy the Premier. If this is the case, it is only another of the many reasons why Eberts and Wells should be summarily dismissed from the cabinet. If Premier Prior is honest in his profession of friendliness to the Provincial Mining Association he must either proceed without delay to introduce the legislation asked for by that body, or show the reason for his refusal.

THE LANDS AND WORKS DEPARTMENT.

The lands and works department at Victoria is a disgrace to the province. If it is not a question of corruption it is a question of stupidity. There are innumerable complaints concerning the maladministration of this office. This condition of affairs has been in existence in the department for years.

It looks as though the premier were afraid to make a move in the matter.

If the Premier chooses to continue to ignore this disgraceful state of affairs, surely the legislative assembly has the power to step in and endeavor to remedy the evil.

If a committee is to be appointed by the legislature to investigate the workings of the department, it is to be hoped that the inquiry thus instituted will be so searching in its nature that those who are responsible for the evils that exist will be thoroughly exposed. There should be no whitewashing of those who are responsible for the misconduct of the department.

AT IT AGAIN.

There lives at the Coast a man by the name of Clive Phillips-Wolley. He is quite a character in his own particular puerile way. His chief claim to notoriety lies in the fact that he persists in "butting in" whether or no. Since migrating to this province he has thrust himself forward in a manner decidedly objectionable to those who have a proper sense of the fitness of things. He is one of the persons who "know it all," but we have yet to hear that he has made a success of any of the many things he has undertaken. He has "butted" into everything from the slopes of Parnassus to the office of sanitary inspector. Many Kootenaians can bear testimony that he was not a shining success as a sanitary inspector; if he had been, he might have been retained in office. It is also a noteworthy fact that the methods employed in getting him the appointment were about as unsavory as the cesspools which he inspected. His versatility is noteworthy only to the extent that it bears the marks of his late occupation rather than of the divine afflatus.

The latest freak movement of Mr. Phillips-Wolley is an attempt to tag an "organ" onto the Provincial Mining Association. In view of the fact that the Provincial Mining Association is a thoroughly provincial organization and so broad in its scope of usefulness that every newspaper in British Columbia can well afford to fully report and endorse its every action, it is difficult to see why the association needs an organ. The only possible benefit that could arise from the selection of an organ would be all for the organ. It looks then as though the naming of one paper instead of relying on the entire public

press of the province would be against the best interests of the association. We do not know whether Mr. Phillips-Wolley is financially interested in the journal which he proposed to make the official mouthpiece of the association; but if he is, his action is the more open to condemnation. It is gratifying to know that the executive committee of the association has not accepted any responsibility in the matter and that there is no likelihood of it doing so. However, our hyphenated friend, although squelched for a moment, will need some watching, for there is no telling when he will break loose again with some equally stupid and pernicious suggestion. If men like Mr. Phillips-Wolley are to be allowed to "butt" into the inner councils of an organization like the Provincial Mining Association, it would be well to see that they cause as little trouble as possible. Bearing this incident in mind, the association might do worse than remove him from the association's executive at the earliest possible moment.

O TEMPORA, O MORES!

It is idle for Colonel Prior to pretend that he is endeavoring to do the right thing by the people. If he were truly patriotic and disinterested from a personal standpoint he would not be a party to the disgraceful state of affairs that exists at Victoria at the present time. With the Premier it is words, words, words, and nothing but words. In nearly every instance he refuses to act for the good of the country. He is fast acquiring the unenviable reputation of a temporizer, a "jollier," a time-server, a truckler. The people are beginning to ask: Is not the Premier rather inclined to cling to the emoluments and the glamor of office than to act fearlessly and rightfully in the interests of the public weal?

Colonel Prior has promised the Provincial Mining Association many things, but has done nothing to further matters in the House.

He has expressed himself as being favorable to the cause of the East Kootenay coal and petroleum prospectors who have complied with all the requirements of the law but who are denied their unquestionable rights by the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, but he has done nothing to remedy the outrageous policy of the Chief Commissioner, who persistently refuses to recognize their legitimate claims.

He promised the country prosperity. When the estimates were brought down his Finance Minister showed a freak statement of accounts that is nothing short of farcical for a province so rich in resources as British Columbia.

He has prated about immigration and done nothing to bring in settlers while the bleak wastes of the Northwest Territories are attracting thousands daily.

He is Minister of Mines, but uses the portfolio of that great office as a "hot air" football while the mineral industry languishes and those dependent upon it are brought to the verge of financial ruin.

He indulges in vaporings concerning "light railways" and heavy subsidies until men with business ideas and patriotic instincts are disgusted.

He has allowed the rich timber grabbers to force him into making regulations for the acquirement of timber limits that practically shut out the humble timber cruiser.

He stands by complacently while Eberts and Wells endeavor to hand over to the C. P. R. hundreds of thousands of acres of the people's heritage.

He has damned the country with his negligence and indifference. His unholy lust for power has blinded him to his sworn duty. He has made a shocking spectacle of our honorable lieutenant-governor, and perpetuated the shame and horrors of the Dunsmuir regime.

The readers of The Miner have fresh in their minds the good will that this journal has hitherto tried to exercise towards Premier Prior. It has excused him for many short-comings in the hope that, with the effluxion of time, he would rise superior to the occasion and do his sworn duty to the people.

But The Miner cannot conscientiously continue to ignore his trimming, weak and shuffling policy. This journal speaks for a large majority of the people of this district, and but reflects the popular opinion of the Kootenays concerning Colonel Prior when it declares: "Out upon him!"

Advertisers should remember that The Daily Miner reaches the wage

SOME COAL FIGURES.

An exchange remarks that the discovery, a short time ago, of new and large deposits of anthracite coal in a suburb of Wilkesbarre, Penn., assures a further supply of that fuel for many years to come. It is estimated that the tract of 2000 acres contains 300,000,000 tons of coal, and that it will require 5000 men, working 200 years for 250 days in the year, to bring the deposit to the surface. Eight new veins were discovered and twelve others now being worked were found to be rich. While there may be some exaggeration in the figures given out, the new find will without doubt prove a valuable adjunct to the present source of supply. It is probable that other unknown deposits exist, and that the supply of anthracite coal in Pennsylvania will outlast many generations.

According to authorities who have investigated the subject and reduced it to statistics, the supply heretofore known will last from eighty to one hundred years, if the annual production be 60,000,000 tons. The total amount of tons mined from 1820 to 1900, inclusive, was 1,197,706,181, and it is calculated that there yet remain to be mined something over five billion tons. What the industry has been worth to the state of Pennsylvania is incalculable, for it has entered into every interest of the people. All the territory embracing the anthracite fields was bought from the Indians. In 1749 a section 125 miles long by 30 miles wide was purchased for the sum of \$2500. The increase in value since is shown in the present price of real estate. Today it is said that an acre of coal land containing three feet of workable coal will command from \$500 to \$600, while a building lot in Wilkesbarre on one of its busy thoroughfares will bring more than \$20,000. In 1774 land was sold in the neighborhood of Soran for four cents an acre that could not be bought now for \$3000. The coal lands have done more than anything else to place Pennsylvania in the front rank of industrial states, and the recent discoveries give much satisfaction.

The people of British Columbia may gain from the figures quoted a sharper appreciation of what the coal lands in this province may be worth in time to come if they are properly administered. They may also find more reason for objecting to the said lands being given away to big corporations. That game has evidently been played too long already.

CONCERNING THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL, MR. CURTIS AND THIS JOURNAL.

(From Saturday's Daily.)

Attorney-General Eberts was entirely mistaken the day before yesterday when he stated in the House that Smith Curtis, M. L. A., writes the editorials that appear in The Miner. Mr. Curtis never wrote an editorial for this journal, and he never will so long as the present editor has anything to say about it. It is highly probable that Mr. Curtis would be as reluctant to write for us as we would be to print what he wrote. But we are not so sure about the attorney-general. Mr. Eberts does not seem to relish all that is said about him in these columns, and the chances are that he would rather see the productions of his own pen, or of some "feeder" of his, than what appears now. Probably Mr. Eberts would like to control The Miner. If The Miner were inclined to prostitute itself he might stand some show, but as it has no intention of doing so Mr. Eberts' opportunities for controlling this journal are, if possible, more remote than those of Smith Curtis.

Meanwhile The Miner will continue to demand the removal of Mr. Eberts from the cabinet and from public life. It is the opinion of this paper that he is not a fit person to occupy a public office. It is inconceivable that he should be a minister of the crown, except that every one of his colleagues is tarred with the same brush. But the most astonishing feature of all is the horrible realization that there exists in British Columbia an electoral district that is so lacking in wholesome sentiment as to select such a man as Mr. Eberts to represent it in the legislative assembly.

MR. EBERTS AND HIS OATH OF OFFICE.

"The very unusual incidents in connection with the making and cancellation of land grants for the Columbia & Western railway enterprise," says the New Westminster Columbia, "have drawn out Mr. Eberts, to the extent that he impresses upon his colleagues and the members of the legislature the sanctity of the oath of office they have taken."

This oath ought to be set in the largest type in the King's printer's office, and neatly printed for conspicuous display in the executive council chamber and in the ministers' offices.

Constant reminder in this shape might have a salutary effect. For instance, it cannot be in accordance with a minister's oath of office to press upon a railway company grants of timber, coal and oil lands, never asked for by the company; to tantalize the officers of the company by the exhibition of these grants decorated with the great seal

of the province; to take them back for display in other quarters as evidence of the omnipotence of an individual minister, and finally to advise the lieutenant-governor that his approval of the issue of the grants was obtained only as an experiment, and that it becomes his duty to cancel the portentous document.

The oath of office contemplates no executive gymnastics of this kind. Neither does it provide that the law officer of the crown shall lurk in the corridor when the legislature is in need of professional advice upon a measure of so grave import that even after unanimous passage by the house in the attorney-general's willing absence, the lieutenant-governor wants time to consider it.

To whom must the lieutenant-governor—a layman—look for advice on the law points involved? To the attorney-general, who skulked in the corridor rather than advise the legislature? Or must his honor call upon eminent counsel outside the circle of his official advisers?

THE VICTORIA CRISIS.

The investigation by the special committee of the legislature appointed to examine into the scandal arising from the East Kootenay land frauds came to a dramatic climax yesterday when ex-Premier Dunsmuir gave his testimony. It is evident from The Miner's report this morning that Mr. Dunsmuir was loath to expose the chief commissioner or to refer to the machinations of the Attorney-General's law partner, but he had to in order to clear himself. The net result of the whole miserable business is that proof has been established of an attempt to perpetrate a gigantic political job. Compared with it, the Gamey charges in Ontario sink into insignificance. It is the most conscienceless and appalling instance of political rascality under the British flag since the days of Sir Horace Walpole.

There can be no doubt but that the Dunsmuir revelations have helped clear up certain points concerning the attitude of the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, but that does not help the Commissioner, and we cannot congratulate the ex-premier. It is inconceivable that sworn ministers of the crown should find it necessary to be hauled before a committee of the legislature in order to reveal their knowledge of a plan for the wrongful alienation of hundreds of thousands of acres of crown lands.

If the Attorney-General's law partner, Mr. Taylor, was in a position to offer the Chief Commissioner the princely domain of 30,000 acres of valuable land, and there were, as the report says, nineteen other members of the C. P. R. subsidiary company who were to share it a similar extent, it does not say much for the validity of the claim of the railway company to these lands. We consider this one of the most important points in yesterday's revelations.

What the people would like to know now is. How long will the lieutenant-governor permit Messrs. Wells and Eberts to retain their portfolios as ministers of the crown?

It is also important to know what Premier Prior is going to do about it. E. C. Smith of Southeast Kootenay, John Houston of Nelson and more than a dozen other Government supporters had better get in also and declare themselves.

There can be but one end to the whole miserable business. The C. P. R.-Dunsmuir-Island crowd have got to go. They have held the country back long enough. The people are thoroughly disgusted with their political buccaneering. The Miner has claimed all along that it is this crowd that is solely responsible for the present industrial stagnation and general outside distrust, but never was there so much reason for that belief as there is today. The sooner they are thrown out of office the better it will be for everybody.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE EAST KOOTENAY FRAUD.

So few people seem to be familiar with all the circumstances bearing upon the Columbia & Western scandal that a brief review of its main features would not be amiss at the present time.

The act of April 17, 1896, provided a land subsidy for the building of the C. & W. railway. This act provided 20,000 acres a mile for the road from Robson to Penticton, and also for "deficiency" areas.

The lands reserved under the act were in alternate blocks on either side of, and contiguous to, the railway, and were 6 by 16 miles, or 96 square miles each.

In case these blocks would not furnish the total of 20,000 acres per mile of railway, the government and the C. & W. railway was empowered to arrange for

"deficiency blocks" elsewhere, but they were to be REASONABLY NEAR, OR CONTIGUOUS TO, THE LINE OF RAILWAY.

This deficiency clause, and the selection of the deficiency blocks are the crux of the chief trouble and the present crisis.

Let it be clearly understood that the Opposition makes this its chief base of attack, and has little complaint against the government or C. & W. outside of this, so far as the act of 1896 is concerned.

The railway was not constructed beyond Midway, but, owing to the immense value and size of the land grant, the railway company wanted to resort to "deficiency" blocks.

Now we arrive at the crux of the Oliver charges and the weakest point of government resistance.

The "deficiency" areas were to be selected along the line of the newly constructed railway and reasonably near to BLOCKS 493 AND 494, THE "DEFICIENCY BLOCKS," WERE LOCATED IN THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE PROVINCE, BETWEEN 200 AND 300 MILES FROM SECTIONS 3 AND 4 OF THE NEW RAILWAY.

A BLOCK 200 MILES DISTANT IS NOT CONTIGUOUS, OR ADJACENT TO, NOR EVEN REASONABLY NEAR.

Here, then, is where the Government erred, and to correct this error of September 4, 1901, an order-in-council of March 18, 1902, was passed to rescind the first order-in-council of September 4, 1901. The bill just passed by the House is to ratify the rescinding order-in-council.

By the present bill and the rescinding order-in-council the government acknowledges its previous error.

The order-in-council passed September 4, 1901, set aside the two deficiency blocks for the C. & W. railway.

The crown grants of said blocks 4538 and 4594 were duly executed October 3, 1901, but were not handed over.

Had they been handed over the matter would have been settled, but as they were not the transaction was never completed.

In ordinary transactions it is necessary to execute, sign, seal and deliver before a transfer is completed, before a bargain of any great importance is closed.

In March 18, 1902, the above order-in-council and the crown grants already executed but not handed over "were rescinded and cancelled."

Mr. Oliver charges that during the course of these various transactions various questions were asked on the floor of the house, and some of them were falsely answered.

The order-in-council granting the deficiency blocks 4593 and 4594 to the C. & W. R. was passed September 4, 1901. The crown grants of these blocks were executed October 3, 1901, but not handed over.

The order-in-council rescinding the above order-in-council was passed March 18, 1902.

Mr. Curtis asked Hon. Mr. Wells six questions, March 21, 1902. In answer to No. 1 Mr. Wells said that the total subsidy due the company for sections 1, 2 and 4 was 2,503,312 acres.

Mr. Curtis in No. 2 asked: "Have the crown grants for the whole or part of this acreage been prepared?"

Mr. Wells answered: "Yes, for a part."

The third question: "Have these crown grants been completed and issued?" was answered by, "Yes, in part."

On April 8, 1902, Mr. Curtis asked Hon. Mr. Wells five questions:

No. 1—"For how many acres have crown grants been issued to the Columbia & Western railway?"

Answer—"722,020 acres."

Here follows the test question with its answer:

No. 2—"For how many acres have crown grants been prepared, but not issued?"

ANSWER—"THERE ARE NO ADDITIONAL CROWN GRANTS PREPARED."

Mr. Curtis again, May 2, 1902, asked Hon. Mr. Wells two questions, the first one alone bearing on the present topic.

1st—"Why have not crown grants for 896,488 acres (the amount yet due to the C. & W. Ry. Co.) said to be earned by the C. & W. R. Co. for section 3, not been issued?"

Answer—"Because up to the present time no arrangement has been arrived at with the company determining what lands shall be adopted."

The Opposition does not believe there was any such agreement made with the C. & W. that permitted that company to get the subsidy for section 4 without building section 5.

Mr. Oliver claims the order-in-council did not and could not rescind and therefore the crown grants, when duly executed, were not and could not be cancelled by the rescinding act. Hence he argues that when the government denied that there were crown grants prepared and not issued a falsehood was told.

But none of the ministerial scoundrels have yet explained why they were prepared to give lands in East Kootenay 20 to 300 miles away from the line of railway.

The rest is recent history.

The contention and charges of The Miner are now substantiated in every particular and a great victory has been won in the cause of justice and a mag-

nificent heritage has been saved to the people.

NO SUBSIDIES.

The new Trans-Canada railway people are pushing their surveys. C. E. Perry, well known in railway construction in the Kootenays, is the engineer in charge of the centre district. During February and March he has explored about 400 miles east and west of the Nelson river at a point where it leaves Lake Winnipeg. He has declared the country to be exceptionally easy. Gradients are slight and curves few and gentle. In one place a hundred mile straight line has been located. An excellent crossing of the Nelson river was found. Mr. Perry described the soil and climate as splendid.

Still the "practical" politicians at both Ottawa and Victoria are talking about large subsidies for the new railway. If what Mr. Perry says is true (knowing him as we do, we do not doubt him for a moment) the builders of the road should consider themselves fortunate in having an opportunity to proceed with construction immediately and without any government assistance. Any attempt to raid the public treasury for the benefit of Canada's new transcontinental railway will be worse than folly. It would be a wanton waste of the country's money for the benefit of the boot-lickers. If Canada's public men would only be true to their country, there would never be another subsidy paid out for railway construction.

THE SCANDAL AT VICTORIA.

The Lieutenant-Governor has assented to the bill which cancels the C. & W. railway grant in East Kootenay. The Government has arranged for an adjournment of the legislature for one week. Before the House meets again the special committee of the legislature will have had an opportunity to sift the scandal to the bottom. In the interim, more witnesses will be called before the committee to tell all they know of the iniquitous proceedings in connection with the attempted frauds.

There can be but one verdict to the investigation. The case is not sub judice, and therefore The Miner doesn't hesitate to discuss it. Enough evidence has already been produced to show that fraud has been attempted. Irregular and illegal attempts have been made to upset the rights of the people. Exposure has followed so thoroughly that there can be no question as to the looseness of the methods of the provincial ministry. Those in high office who are implicated must immediately resign or be discharged. Both the Chief Commissioner and the Attorney-General have much to answer for. They have been shown up in an unenviable light, and we cannot see how either of them can escape the consequences. It looks as though it were impossible for the Premier to retain them in his cabinet. His dismissal of both of them can only be accepted by the electorate as more strictly in keeping with public policy.

A crisis is at hand. It is not for us to prophesy what will be the outcome. No man can foretell. British Columbia politics are too uncertain a quantity.

There is, however, no little gratification to be had from the announcement of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. McBride. He has taken The Miner and its readers into his confidence and declared that he and his followers will spare no effort in having the East Kootenay scandal fully ventilated. This is the first time that the Leader of the Opposition has expressed himself on the subject outside of the House.

The Governor's assent to Bill 16 has no direct bearing on the rights of prospectors who have complied with the requirements of the law. For obvious reasons the railway company could never have gained advantage over them, provided they stood out for their rights. The Miner strongly urges them to ignore the bull-dozing policy of Chief Commissioner Wells and hold out for their rights. If it is necessary, they should take the matter to the highest courts. Kootenaians are not bluffed easily and will probably take this course if occasion really demands it.

The Premier presents a truly pitiful spectacle. Harboring in his cabinet men who have concealed to the last moment the fact that they were approached and offered bribes, he must suffer the ignominy and shame of being indirectly a party to defraud the people. He, as much as Wells and Eberts, is a political leper and should be immediately turned out of office. This, in all probability, will be his fate.

Rural deans and proctors and vicars and bishops are in a frenzy in London over the remarriage of W. K. Vanderbilt, because it was done in such a fashion that the doors of the church remained locked during the ceremony. It is such a rarity for this family to do anything that savors of a retiring disposition of a backdoor marriage, that America with its love for novelty cannot but approve. What's the matter anyway—the marriage certainly took place, didn't it?

The Geological Department of the Indian government is preparing, according to Indian Engineering, to carry out a thorough search of some of the coal fields in the country through a system of experimental borings. The discovery of large beds of good steam coal in India would doubtless result in a wonderful development of its manufacturing industries.

Mr. L. B. Joseph, a lumber company Vancouver making opening of a loggia coast of Vancouver about forty-five miles Vancouver, the Port San Juan. The company will be known as the Logging company. Mr. Joseph says he is gradually developing middle of summer. For form the mechanics of the timber to and it will be still side of the line. The timber stands ed, and it may be

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