

POINT ELLICE BRIDGE.

It is Likely That the Inquest Into the Disaster Will Be Finished To-Day.

Mr. H. P. Bell Thinks It Is Impossible to Say Just How the Accident Happened.

Of the first few witnesses examined yesterday morning at the continuation of the Point Ellice bridge inquest the only new evidence brought out was that of W. H. Jones, who stated that at half-past one on the day of the accident two cars and a trailer, all loaded, left Campbell's corner at the same time and all were on Point Ellice bridge at once, the last entering the bridge about fifty feet behind the other cars, he believed; whether it kept the same distance going over the bridge he could not say.

John Teague, who was mayor of the city in 1895, gave it as his opinion that the city engineer was responsible for the inspection of the bridges; witness had no suspicion as to the safety of the bridge during his term, if he had he would have instructed the city engineer to examine it; his idea was that the city engineer was appointed inspector merely to see that the planking and roadway was in good order, and to make casual repairs and was not supposed to refer to the care of the structural part; it was not a fact, as far as he was concerned, that the City Engineer was subject to the streets committee; he had known of members of the council interfering with the Engineer, but had done his best to stop it; the trouble was that as a rule ten minutes after an alderman was sworn he considered himself a full-fledged engineer.

H. P. Bell, recalled, gave the results of his examination of the bridge as an engineer. In some respects the bridge was not well designed; 75 feet in the middle of the top chord, instead of being designed to have been packed; if he were designing it he would pack the whole top chord; the floor system is defective, as the lateral rods should not be through the floor beams; J. A. L. Waddell, an authority on high bridges, in his work on the subject held that the lower lateral rods are not to be attached to the floor beams, but to the bottom chord pins. He supposed the bridge was built the other way because it was cheaper; to join the rods to the floor beams induced premature decay; he had never seen bottom laterals attached to floor beams in any other bridge; the details of the bridge were not well carried out; he did not believe a safe bridge could be built for the amount of money that bridge was reported to have cost. The bridge was safe enough for ordinary traffic, but not for tramway traffic, especially when the rails are laid to one side. As he had stated before he found the weight of the bridge to be about 900 pounds instead of 600 pounds to the foot; if the sidewalk, as was suggested, had not been included in the original plans the weight would have been about 700 pounds to the foot. According to his figures the strain sheet were not right for the loads it was assumed to carry, but not for tramway traffic; the bridge might be safe for tram cars weighing, when loaded, ten tons, and he might even allow occasionally a twelve-ton car to pass over, but not a regular one. He had in his examination found a number of the iron girders broken by the tension; this might have happened by the top being burst up under under compression or the bottom being bent down; one of the broken pin verticals looked as if it had been previously injured; the iron had not a fibrous texture; another broken vertical also showed that it had lost its fibrous texture; he noticed welded links were used while the specifications called for welded iron; the iron hangers were 1 1/2 inches square iron, whereas for an eighteen-ton car they should be 1 3/4 inches square and for twenty-ton cars passing over 1 9/16 inch. The iron hanger that was broken had not, he believed, merely parted, but a piece had been sheared out in breaking; he had not, however, matched the ends to see; the chord links being welded were not according to the specifications; he had formed no opinion as to what part of the bridge gave way; and he doubted very much if he would believe anyone else's opinion; it was an unsolvable problem; it was impossible to tell whether the rotten floor beam was broken in the bridge or whether it occurred during the fall. It was possible one of the bottom chord links broke that the top chords could be so shaken up that the structure would fall; he thought that the timber that was all in pretty good order except the floor beams; he considered that when the bridge was taken over from the contractors a new strain sheet should have been made out to show just what the bridge weighed, in regard to what he had said about an apparent old injury to one of the hangers, he believed that a proper system of inspection of the bridge would probably have discovered it. He would not himself design a bridge with a hanging floor; engineers had abandoned that design years ago. Constant inspection would not save a bridge that was being overloaded all the time; if the floor system was properly designed the breaking of a floor beam or a hanger should not bring the bridge down.

The inquest was further adjourned till 9:30 this morning, when Mr. Wilnot and Street Superintendent Wilson will be recalled, and it is thought that this will conclude the evidence.

ARMOR PLATE.

Mr. G. H. Rollinson, of the great Sheffield steel firm of Siemens, is at the Dr. H. He has just come from Chili, and after a pleasure trip to Alaska will leave for Japan, and will be in the interests of his firm. The Siemens company are particularly famous for the armor plate they make for naval vessels, and many of the great war ships of the world have their sides protected by plates turned out by the Siemens. Mr. Rollinson's trip to Chili was in connection with a new cruiser which is being built for the Chilean navy. The Siemens company are supplying the

armor. The new ship is to be about the size and type of H.M.S. Blenheim and is to be built at Valparaiso. Of the 14 new vessels, from great cruisers to torpedo boats, which the Japanese are having built in England the Siemens are supplying armor for a considerable number, and Mr. Rollinson's trip to the Mikado's kingdom is partly in this connection and partly on account of the more peaceful wares in metal which the firm turns out. Speaking of the comparison between the great guns manufactured by the Americans and the British, Mr. Rollinson remarked that while the Americans seemed to be trying to make their weapons of as long range as possible, in Great Britain they were using their efforts towards greater accuracy and with marked success, as the wonderful score made by the Royal Arthur a few months ago gave an example.

Mr. Rollinson formed quite a high opinion of the Chilean naval forces. The officers have many of them received their naval training in England, and the navy is capable of doing remarkably good work. Nickel was not yet proved as successful as was at first hoped for combining with steel and armor plates, but experiments are continually being made to overcome the difficulties in the way of getting the right hardness. The trouble so far has been that sometimes the plates are too hard.

THE CITY.

The annual Union Picnic of the Presbyterian Sabbath schools will take place at Goldstream on July 1.

Mr. Frank, Sores, the Government agent at Clinton, has resigned his commission as a Justice of the Peace, his resignation being accepted by the Lieutenant-Governor.

Dr. E. J. BOWES, of Rossland, has been appointed coroner for the Trail creek division of West Kootenay, and Dr. J. E. Brouse, of New Denver, as coroner for the Slokan mining division.

Among the foreign mining companies recently organized to do business in this province is the "Wonderful Group Mining Co. of Spain." It is capitalized at one million dollars in shares of one dollar each.

YESTERDAY'S issue of the British Columbia Gazette gives information of a re-division of the boundaries of Nanaimo and Parksville school districts, and of the creation of a new district to be known as Qualicum. The new district will give accommodation to the children of school age residing in the northern and eastern part of Nanaimo district.

RESIDENTS of the settlement of Eucluley may hereafter enjoy the convenience of registering every marriage that is solemnized in their midst without a journey by sloop or train or steamer to comply with the formalities. Mr. M. Swartout is the gentleman who enjoys the distinction of being the first registrar of licenses under the Marriage Act for the settlement of Eucluley.

INCORPORATION is announced of the San Joaquin Gold Mining Co. of this city, the promoters are Mr. J. W. Higgins and Mr. A. J. McLellan. The capital stock of the company is placed at \$1,000,000 in \$1 shares, and the object of the company is stated to be to purchase the San Joaquin mineral claim in West Kootenay and develop that claim to account.

The city of Rossland is nothing if not right up to the times, and consequently no one will be surprised to learn that six enterprising citizens of the British Columbia Butte, have recently secured the incorporation of stock exchange for the new mining city. It is to be known as the Rossland Stock Exchange of British Columbia, and is capitalized at \$50,000 in \$50 shares. The trustees are Messrs. John M. Burke, R. S. Bealey, S. M. Wharton, A. B. Irwin, Ross Thompson and J. B. McArthur.

At the Vernon assizes, held before Chief Justice Davis on Monday last, John Evans charged with cattle stealing and robbery with violence, was acquitted, as was also Arthur Black, who had two indictments against him for bringing stolen property into Canada. Evans, charged with perjury, pleaded not guilty and was acquitted. For shooting with intent, Thomas Deddie was sentenced to five years in the penitentiary. Booth, who was charged with whiskey was notifiable in Canada, was convicted and sentenced to two years imprisonment.

A PETITION has been in circulation and receiving many signatures in Victoria. West during the past few days, pointing out the difficulty residents of that portion of the city have been put to since the breaking of the Point Ellice bridge—namely, to go from their homes to the city by way of the Gorge, which means a haul of about seven miles—and asking that provision be made for the use of the E. & N. railway bridge by vehicles as well as pedestrians, a drive by way of the old Esquimalt road being put in order for use in connection. The petition will probably be completed in time to have it brought before the city council at the next regular meeting of that body.

But little information was elicited at the Coroner's inquest in the city hall at 8 o'clock last evening, which threw any light on the manner in which Charles Clark was drowned. Dr. Fraser testified that whiskey was notifiable in the contents of his stomach and that the external marks on the body were caused by decomposition. Mr. Holmes, another witness, described the finding of the body, and stated that the Coroner, of the schooner Kate, was the only other witness called. He identified the body as that of an able seaman employed on the schooner Kate, whose apprenticeship papers showed him to be a man of 22 years of age. The deceased came out here on the bark Ardmore, sometime about Christmas last. He was engaged on the Kate in January, and Stromer last saw him alive a week ago yesterday. The jury, consisting of Messrs. S. Reid (foreman), A. E. Erskine, M. C. Winn, James Manson, H. C. Edwards and Edward White, came to the following conclusion: "That the deceased came to his death by drowning on Thursday, June 4," adding a rider to their verdict to the effect that they would respectfully suggest that something in the shape of a refrigerator be placed in the city morgue.

PROTECTION IN DEMAND.

The Representative Liberal of Colquitz Declares for More of It for the Farmers.

Resolution of Thanks for the Members' Services—An Interesting Meeting.

Hon. E. G. Prior and Mr. Thomas Earle met the electors of Colquitz last evening at the Colquitz hall on the Carey road, which had been the scene of the troubled meeting of the opposition candidates nearly a week previous. The hall was well filled, and the audience included several ladies, who having special interest in the hospitable feature of coffee and cake with which the proceedings terminated, were with the rest detained until one o'clock this morning. The meeting was a specially interesting one from the fact that while the opposition representatives present were given opportunity to be heard, the only objection they had to urge was that in the respects they mentioned the farmers have not got enough of protection. Mr. Earle elicited great applause by his declaration in response that the gentlemen who want more protection are out of place in the free trade ranks of the opposition, and by his cordial invitation to Mr. Stephens to join the Liberal-Conservative party to which as a protectionist he should belong. Mr. Stanley Tytler having been chosen as chairman opened the proceedings shortly after 8 o'clock.

Mr. Thomas Earle being first called on, said he wished to speak a few words on the two chief questions now before the public—first of all the fiscal policy of the government, the National Policy, under which Canada has prospered for so many years. He recalled the condition to which the country was brought under the reign of Hon. Alexander Macdonald introduced the National Policy, which has since 1878 been sustained by the people at every general election. He hoped the Conservative party would uphold their leaders in their determination that so far as they can help it Canadian treaties will be carried out. (Great applause.) He felt convinced that as soon as the elections are over the government will agree to settle this matter, and thus remove the necessity for the so-called "coercion" bill. He thought it entirely wrong to use that word in this connection, and anyhow he did not believe that any British Columbia electors would neglect their own interest—the tariff—for a question which should never have been heard of outside Manitoba. While those who raised it fastened upon the school question, the venerable Doctor finished his address and left the platform amidst great applause.

Hon. E. G. Prior was next called upon. He said Colquitz had done itself proud by the attendance of ladies at the meeting, which he thought could not fail to have a good effect upon the speakers, who were all men of high character and not ashamed—notwithstanding the disapproval of the Times—to be found here to-night singing the same old story, about the maintenance of the grand old flag and the old policy, under one of the ablest of the old leaders. (Great applause.) He asked the electors to contrast the policies of the two great parties now before the country—the Liberal-Conservative party and the Liberal party—since 1878, and the Liberal party, and as in his previous addresses he recounted the main features of the Liberal-Conservative policy since Confederation, and to improve the quality of the goods, to improve public improvements, including Sir Richard Cartwright's declaration a few years ago that it was time to call a halt in the matter of subsidies to railways, which all those of British Columbia are next dealt with the matter of preferential trade between the colonies of Great Britain and the Empire, a policy which the Liberal-Conservative party, Liberals now hasten to claim as theirs also, although their efforts in the past and their trade policy now have been and are directly opposite in tendency. In his second address he recounted Cartwright's historic declaration that "the market of the United States is worth all the rest of the world to us," and Mr. Laurier's that "we should follow the English example and open our ports to the world." Dealing particularly with the farming interests, this being a meeting of farmers, he showed what the government have since 1878, and are now doing for agriculture, by means of the farms where experiments with seeds and fertilizers are made for the farmers' benefit, and whence the low wages of the country to show to the farmers, their wives, sons and daughters, the most improved and profitable methods of making butter and cheese; and he pointed out that one of those instructors has been some time on this island, and will be heard from in this district before he returns. 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