

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE

ANOTHER HURRIED ADJOURNMENT TAKEN

Speeches by Messrs. Prior, Curtis and Eberts—Rumors Regarding Railway Negotiations.

Press Gallery, March 17th.

The government of British Columbia is again on an up-grade, with no sand to help make the wheels go round. This afternoon a paralysis seemed to have set in, and the government was incapable of getting beyond the debate on the address, a break being made for adjournment the moment the order paper proper was reached. The first half hour of the sitting Joseph Martin spent among the ministers, and there seemed to be a heart to heart talk between the senior member for Vancouver and the Attorney-General especially. It is no secret that the composite household which a common danger keeps together in the government fold is already showing indications of a stampee from the government's hearthstone, so wide has spread suspicion and mistrust. This afternoon absolute impotence marked the government. Two ministers spoke, the Minister of Mines apologetically and absolutely without the least hint of a rumor says that the much-touted railway negotiations have practically been vetoed by the Pacific Improvement Company, joint owners with the Premier of the E. & N. railway. Mackenzie & Mann, it is stated, offered the owners two million in bonds, but the owners wanted the cash. This was not only declined, according to report, but the contractors were told to get out of the Island railway out of the draft contract. Whether this is authentic or not, the government certainly has some reason for keeping all the documents in the matter locked in the secret of its own breast.

On Mr. Curtis attempting to bring a charge against the government on private regarding the railway deal, Mr. Martin objected that something that affected the whole community could not be brought up on privilege, as distinguished from matters affecting members in their private capacity.

Mr. Curtis held to the contrary. He was prepared to make a charge against the minister. "Why should I not?" he asked. "He made a grave accusation, realizing the responsibility he took in doing so."

The Speaker ruled the motion out of order, and the delightful words of John Houston, holding that the railway contract not being before the House the motion was improper.

Mr. Curtis held to the contrary. He was prepared to make a charge against the minister. "Why should I not?" he asked. "He made a grave accusation, realizing the responsibility he took in doing so."

Resuming the debate on the address, Col. Prior said that as he had been in the House and at the head of a department a few days, it was inadvisable for him to go into general policy.

In regard to mining, the change from 100 to 200 feet square in the size of placer claims had given general satisfaction.

Agents could now only take up two claims, and only after filing their power of attorney. This had also given satisfaction, as well as the rule code, which had been favored by nearly all the miners in the country.

Many of the mine owners did not agree with that code, and their grievances had been set forth in the Mine Owners' Memorial. He had not yet had time to give that full consideration.

The mine owners also objected to sending a question whether these should be filed individually when filed with the government. He thought that was merely wise, but there could be no objection to the publication of the aggregate from each district.

The coal miners' examination had met with universal approval, both from the miners and owners. The first election under this had passed off without any trouble.

The year 1901 had been very satisfactory, notwithstanding the predictions of those who thought that it would be otherwise.

In June, 1901, the mineralogist published an estimate. The returns showed how close he came to the facts. The tonnage had increased 66 per cent. over 1900. The itemization of this was as follows:

Placer gold, decrease 27.45 per cent.
Lode gold, increase 2.15 per cent.
Total gold increase 2.15 per cent.
Silver, increase 22.15 per cent.
Lead, decrease 22.15 per cent.
Copper, increase 2.15 per cent.
Coal, increase 1.15 per cent.
Coke, increase 4.15 per cent.

The gold output of Klondike had been only \$18,000,000, as compared with British Columbia's \$20,000,000.

worked out, but hydraulic mining was taking the place of individual mining. Atlin was in a transition period, and would have a bigger output next year. Old Cariboo had taken a new lease of life, and large investments were being made there, and great returns would be made as soon as railways could be got into that country. Supplies had to be sent to Barkerville, 280 miles by wagon. Geographically, Cariboo was on the line of the railway the government wanted built, namely, the Canadian Northern.

The total value of output was estimated at \$20,713,501 in 1901, as compared with \$16,244,757 in 1900, an increase of 25 per cent.

Increases by metals were as follows: Copper, 200 per cent.; lode gold, 36 per cent.; silver, 14 per cent.

Tonnage of ore mined, 1900, 554,706; 1901, 871,832; increase, 75 per cent.

The statistics so far show that the increase will be much larger.

The production in Canada and British Columbia follows:

	Canada.	B. C.
Gold (outside Yukon)	\$6,462,222	\$5,906,700
Copper (lbs.)	40,657,194	90,736,738
Silver (ozs.)	5,078,318	4,685,713
Lead (lbs.)	53,756,440	50,529,260
Coal (tons of 2,000)	1,016,296	1,712,713
Coke (lbs.)	373,625	150,931

The lead production of 1901, although showing a decrease as compared with 1900, shows an increase over 1898 of 87 per cent., and over 1899 of 129 per cent., and is still 25 per cent. higher than the highest production of any year prior to 1900.

In regard to labor troubles, they had been confined to the Rossland camp, and were now practically over. The supply of practical miners was under the requirements, and more or less inexperienced men had to be employed. This led to trouble.

When thoroughly acquainted with his department he hoped to be able to present the features of mining development in British Columbia in a much better way.

Mr. McPhillips pointed out to the Minister of Mines that there was no law covering prospecting for coal in this country. Clients of his had been shut out from investment because of this.

The Minister of Mines laid on the table the Coal Miners' Regulation Amendment Act.

Smith Curtis.

Mr. Curtis complained that the mining industry was being neglected by the government, and his right to agitate on the debate being questioned a wrangle ensued. The Speaker ruled that he might speak to the amendment.

Mr. Curtis said the minister had undertaken to tell him what was the cause of the strike at Rossland.

The Minister of Mines—I did not. I undertook to tell you what my idea of it was.

Mr. Curtis—Well, I am very sorry he has not a better idea.

The strike, said Mr. Curtis, was not due to the causes Col. Prior had advanced, but to the strike in the mines, according to a government paper, the Vancouver Province. The men there were untripped by any set of miners on the continent. The men worked under contract, and were paid according to what they did. The strike was unfortunate, for there seemed no cause for it.

Mr. Curtis said the minister had undertaken to tell him what was the cause of the strike at Rossland.

The Minister of Mines—I did not. I undertook to tell you what my idea of it was.

Mr. Curtis—Well, I am very sorry he has not a better idea.

the disallowance of Oriental legislation, and he (the speaker) was informed that the biggest lobby being put up in Washington for the Protector bill was being put up by the representatives of the C. P. R.

This company had sufficient influence to cause the disallowance of the bill at Ottawa, they doubtless had sufficient influence with the present government, which was a C. P. R. government, to see that they brought in no such legislation.

Such legislation as they sought to enact should come from the government, and not from private members. It is required officers to enforce, and hence should come from the government.

He felt that they should not accept any less right than was accorded an Australian, and hence would give the amendment his support.

Hon. D. M. Eberts.

The Attorney-General said the government was very much alive to the Oriental question. In view of the fact that the Dominion governments the mover of the legislation should withdraw it.

The delegation to Ottawa had brought up the question of Chinese and Japanese immigration, and he read the memorial to prove that the government was in earnest on the matter.

Continuing, he held that the provincial government had made out a very strong case, and he also held that the government had done its best to keep the Chinese out. He recalled the bill brought on by Mr. Walker putting \$10 a head on the Chinese, but disallowed by the House. He hoped to see the Dominion government increase the tax to \$500.

From 1872 to 1900 the matter had been a continuous one before the government. The government had assented to the Immigration Act and the Labor Act, introduced by Messrs. Tait and Helmecken. The government had backed up the bills.

Mr. Curtis—Why the provincial secretary took against it.

Mr. Eberts—He may have regarded them as unconstitutional.

The matter was taken up, he said, by the Japanese consul, and the Attorney-General was asked to report to the Imperial government on the matter, and the speaker thereupon read the correspondence of the subject and his written defence of the legislation.

He thought the language employed was as strong as it could possibly be. The matter had gone to the Privy Council, where British Columbia was represented by the government, and the result was that the Chinese were not allowed to enter the province.

Mr. Curtis—He believed the province would win in that case. He then read his letter of instructions to the Minister of Immigration, and he protested against disallowance, and the government would do everything to dissuade the Oriental hordes from coming to this province.

The charge had been made that the government was influenced by the C. P. R. No one had tendered the government advice on the matter. He said that he would speak to the subject through the House if they got the chance. Mr. Helmecken deserved credit for his prompt action, in which he would be backed by the government.

Mr. Curtis—The Premier intended to lay the matter before the King and council on his visit to England. The legislation to date caused the Mikado to forbid immigration.

Mr. McPhillips asked for the report of the Minister of Justice on the matter, as Mr. Martin claimed the disallowance was on grounds of Imperial policy.

This the Attorney-General replied. Continuing, he said this was the only portion of Canada which was really affected by this immigration. Even the passing of resolutions, of no effect so far as law was concerned, would show the Dominion government that the province was in earnest.

In regard to the Rossland strike, it was suggested to the government that the mine owners were getting the best of the labor and bringing in laborers. The province had nothing to do with the Allen Act, which was sought to be introduced, it being a Dominion measure. The labor people at Rossland wired the speaker, and asked him to employ counsel at Rossland to appear for the miners in 50 or 60 cases, and if penalties were levied they would be paid.

He reiterated that the government had not interfered, as did the Martin government, to settle the strike.

The "unfavorable conditions" referred to in the speech from the throne were those of the province. He would like to see the two per cent. tax removed for a while at least. The speaker could not agree that the outlook in mining was good. He found in England a great indifference to mining in this province.

This tax was most onerous on low grade ore, and amounted to 15 or 20 per cent. on the output of some properties.

He thought the government had not interfered, as did the Martin government, to settle the strike.

The "unfavorable conditions" referred to in the speech from the throne were those of the province. He would like to see the two per cent. tax removed for a while at least. The speaker could not agree that the outlook in mining was good. He found in England a great indifference to mining in this province.

This tax was most onerous on low grade ore, and amounted to 15 or 20 per cent. on the output of some properties.

He thought the government had not interfered, as did the Martin government, to settle the strike.

The "unfavorable conditions" referred to in the speech from the throne were those of the province. He would like to see the two per cent. tax removed for a while at least. The speaker could not agree that the outlook in mining was good. He found in England a great indifference to mining in this province.

This tax was most onerous on low grade ore, and amounted to 15 or 20 per cent. on the output of some properties.

He thought the government had not interfered, as did the Martin government, to settle the strike.

The "unfavorable conditions" referred to in the speech from the throne were those of the province. He would like to see the two per cent. tax removed for a while at least. The speaker could not agree that the outlook in mining was good. He found in England a great indifference to mining in this province.

This tax was most onerous on low grade ore, and amounted to 15 or 20 per cent. on the output of some properties.

He thought the government had not interfered, as did the Martin government, to settle the strike.

The "unfavorable conditions" referred to in the speech from the throne were those of the province. He would like to see the two per cent. tax removed for a while at least. The speaker could not agree that the outlook in mining was good. He found in England a great indifference to mining in this province.

This tax was most onerous on low grade ore, and amounted to 15 or 20 per cent. on the output of some properties.

He thought the government had not interfered, as did the Martin government, to settle the strike.

The "unfavorable conditions" referred to in the speech from the throne were those of the province. He would like to see the two per cent. tax removed for a while at least. The speaker could not agree that the outlook in mining was good. He found in England a great indifference to mining in this province.

This tax was most onerous on low grade ore, and amounted to 15 or 20 per cent. on the output of some properties.

He thought the government had not interfered, as did the Martin government, to settle the strike.

The "unfavorable conditions" referred to in the speech from the throne were those of the province. He would like to see the two per cent. tax removed for a while at least. The speaker could not agree that the outlook in mining was good. He found in England a great indifference to mining in this province.

This tax was most onerous on low grade ore, and amounted to 15 or 20 per cent. on the output of some properties.

He thought the government had not interfered, as did the Martin government, to settle the strike.

The "unfavorable conditions" referred to in the speech from the throne were those of the province. He would like to see the two per cent. tax removed for a while at least. The speaker could not agree that the outlook in mining was good. He found in England a great indifference to mining in this province.

This tax was most onerous on low grade ore, and amounted to 15 or 20 per cent. on the output of some properties.

He thought the government had not interfered, as did the Martin government, to settle the strike.

the same point, but the House rose without the matter being settled.

Press Gallery, March 18.

Mr. Curtis launched his bolt against the Premier this evening, when, after a determined effort on the part of the government to prevent him, he got before the House his charge against the Premier and his colleagues in connection with the railway deal. Capt. Taitow was almost as explicit as Mr. Curtis in making his charge. A committee of inquiry will be asked for from the House.

The day was memorable because of the termination of the address on the speech, although the government were evidently desirous that it might be prolonged in order to give them a longer space to put their redistribution house in order. The long-expectant bill failed to materialize again to-day.

The opposition succeeded in putting the government and its Maritime supporters on record as opposing the re-enactment of anti-Oriental legislation, and of refusing to produce the railway correspondence after the coming of private citizens have been permitted to see the papers.

They were well satisfied with the afternoon's achievements.

The Address.

The motion of Mr. Green to adjourn the debate, as mentioned in this afternoon's issue, was as follows:

Resolved, That the House do adjourn until the 22nd inst., at 10 o'clock, P. M.

Mr. Green said he merely wanted the business to be proceeded with, and his views were well known, and he would not further take up the time of the House.

Mr. Gilmour.

Mr. Gilmour was in favor of the amendment, but he thought it was only intended to lead to a vote, and he thought if the opposition came to a vote, he would support the amendment if it came from the government. He was not resentful by Christopher Robinson, of Toronto, who Edward Blake appeared for the Chinese. He believed the province would win in that case. He then read his letter of instructions to the Minister of Immigration, and he protested against disallowance, and the government would do everything to dissuade the Oriental hordes from coming to this province.

The charge had been made that the government was influenced by the C. P. R. No one had tendered the government advice on the matter. He said that he would speak to the subject through the House if they got the chance. Mr. Helmecken deserved credit for his prompt action, in which he would be backed by the government.

Mr. Curtis—The Premier intended to lay the matter before the King and council on his visit to England. The legislation to date caused the Mikado to forbid immigration.

Mr. McPhillips asked for the report of the Minister of Justice on the matter, as Mr. Martin claimed the disallowance was on grounds of Imperial policy.

This the Attorney-General replied. Continuing, he said this was the only portion of Canada which was really affected by this immigration. Even the passing of resolutions, of no effect so far as law was concerned, would show the Dominion government that the province was in earnest.

In regard to the Rossland strike, it was suggested to the government that the mine owners were getting the best of the labor and bringing in laborers. The province had nothing to do with the Allen Act, which was sought to be introduced, it being a Dominion measure. The labor people at Rossland wired the speaker, and asked him to employ counsel at Rossland to appear for the miners in 50 or 60 cases, and if penalties were levied they would be paid.

He reiterated that the government had not interfered, as did the Martin government, to settle the strike.

The "unfavorable conditions" referred to in the speech from the throne were those of the province. He would like to see the two per cent. tax removed for a while at least. The speaker could not agree that the outlook in mining was good. He found in England a great indifference to mining in this province.

This tax was most onerous on low grade ore, and amounted to 15 or 20 per cent. on the output of some properties.

He thought the government had not interfered, as did the Martin government, to settle the strike.

The "unfavorable conditions" referred to in the speech from the throne were those of the province. He would like to see the two per cent. tax removed for a while at least. The speaker could not agree that the outlook in mining was good. He found in England a great indifference to mining in this province.

find some means of economy, yet he had been unable to find any way in which to materially reduce expenditure. For instance, the administration of justice in British Columbia cost \$1,200 per capita, while Manitoba cost \$2 cents, Quebec 33 cents, Nova Scotia 5 cents and Prince Edward Island 16 cents. For roads, British Columbia paid \$2.44 per capita, Manitoba 90 cents, Ontario 12 cents, Quebec 55 cents. The total cost was \$11.62 in British Columbia, compared with \$1.85 in Ontario and \$2.70 in Quebec.

To show how the province lost in initial settlement, he said the capital expenditure in settling 100 families in the Bulkley valley would be \$31,000 the first year, \$8,200 the cost of maintenance, while the revenue from all sources would not exceed \$1,500. On the other hand, if these one hundred families brought \$20,000 worth of goods the Dominion government would get \$5,000 at least.

Mr. Curtis—Are you giving the land away?

The Finance Minister—No.

Mr. Curtis—It is stated in the press that you are giving away 100 acres to each man.

The Finance Minister—I don't know. The terms are not completed.

He argued that the British North America Act would not have to be amended to get better terms, and read the correspondence between Sir John Macdonald and Joseph Howe in the case of Nova Scotia, which seemed to bear out his contention. As a result of that agitation better terms were secured, and large concessions made to Nova Scotia, but even then Nova Scotia was not satisfied, and Howe was so abused that he died of a broken heart. In 1887 Mr. Flavelle swept the province with the cry of "Better terms or secession." The result was that there were identical deals with those who were absent in British Columbia to-day, and before many years passed the Dominion government would be forced to take this matter up.

Mr. Curtis asked the Finance Minister to discuss the railway question.

The Finance Minister—That will be discussed when the papers are before the House.

Mr. Martin—Hear, hear.

Mr. E. C. Smith.

Mr. E. C. Smith, who was received with loud applause, said the troubles through which the province was passing would probably go down to history as "British Columbia's Great War Day." (Laughter.)

Coming to the speech, there was little in the past to warrant satisfaction or to justify hope for the future.

There was but one positive statement, and that was in regard to the reduction of freight rates. That was attributable not to the government or the C. P. R., but to the competition in the field of agricultural produce from the south of the province.

His own district had doubled in population this year owing to the building of the competitive line—hear, hear—the Crow's Nest Southern. That had forced the C. P. R. to anticipate matters by reducing their rates.

The Liquor License Act did not work out satisfactory in his district. Now any one wanting to go into the hotel business had to get a license from the province, and the province was not a member of the board of commissioners.

Concluding, he asked that those present who helped to fight the Empire's battles should be protected in their rights. He believed the act protecting them had lapsed, and he asked that the province be made so that their rights would be preserved.

The Division.

A division was then taken on the address, which resulted the same as on the Helmecken amendment, namely, 16-18.

The Finance Minister moved that the address be referred to a select committee, consisting of members of the government. This passed.

The Speaker then declared the address carried, and Messrs. Prior and Eberts snatched their desks delightedly.

First Readings.

The following bills were introduced and read a first time:

Mr. McPhillips—To amend the Liquor License Act, 1900.

Mr. Curtis—To amend the Railway Assessment Act.

The Redistribution Bill being reached, Mr. Eberts said "hush," and being charged by the opposition took a document out of his pocket and shook it, saying "Hush, hush," while his opponents shouted, "Let us see it."

E. & N. Timber Cut.

Capt. Taitow moved that an order of the House be granted for a return setting forth:

1. Amount of royalties collected on timber cut within the Esquimalt & Nanaimo railway belt in the years 1890, 1891 and 1901?

2. From whom such royalties were collected?

3. Amount of timber cut within said belt in the years 1890, 1900 and 1901?

4. How much of same has been exported or manufactured?

5. How much timber cut within said limits in each of said years paid no royalties?

6. By whom it was cut?

He said: "I frankly admit that my object in making this motion is for the purpose of showing that the amendment 'Hush, hush' is a mere trick played in as you are aware at a very late hour on the last day of the session, and was put through the House too hastily, and did not receive the consideration so important a subject deserves."

"I contend that the effect of the act in prohibiting the export of timber cut on private lands is to lower the value of such lands as compared with lands of land in private hands which are not affected by the act, such as the E. & N. railway lands; and I want to find as far as possible the extent of this injurious discrimination."

"The timber inspector's report does not give this information, as that official stated on the 18th inst. that the amount of timber cut on the E. & N. belt for 1890, was as follows: 1900, 427,111 cords; 1901, 427,111 cords. I have not been able to obtain an account of the quantities (timber and cordwood) cut on Dominion lands, and of the quantities of such timber cut on private lands, and I want to find as far as possible the extent of this injurious discrimination."

Mr. Curtis said he agreed with the last speaker. There was something wrong. He would make a specific charge, and to-morrow would ask for a commission of inquiry.

Objection being taken by the Attorney-General, the Speaker said that the Premier had given away a great amount of land, in return for which he was to receive a big price for the E. & N.

The Minister of Mines—What has that got to do with it?

Mr. Curtis said he agreed with the last speaker. There was something wrong. He would make a specific charge, and to-morrow would ask for a commission of inquiry.

Objection being taken by the Attorney-General, the Speaker said that the Premier had given away a great amount of land, in return for which he was to receive a big price for the E. & N.

The Minister of Mines—What has that got to do with it?

Mr. Curtis said he agreed with the last speaker. There was something wrong. He would make a specific charge, and to-morrow would ask for a commission of inquiry.

long as they were used for railway purposes. He took issue that this timber could be used for any and all purposes and not be subject to taxation. The intention of parliament was to give the timber the benefit of the land tax for use for railway purposes. Timber and coal were chattel interests, and if the general law of the country admitted of taxation then they were not exempt. He was loath to withdraw from the company any benefits it acquired under its charter. But it was their duty to make the burden of taxation fall where it should be borne, and that there should be no privileges to any one.

Mr. Neil held that the tax was falling on piles and props heavier than on timber. The act of last year also killed the export trade in props, and this affected districts like North Victoria, which should be represented.

The Chief Commissioner said the government was considering the modification of the act in the direction indicated by Mr. Neil.

The motion passed.

The Railway "Agreement."

Mr. Helmecken moved the following resolution: That in humble address be presented to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, asking him to cause to be laid before this House copies of the proposed contract and all correspondence and letters and other material which have passed between the provincial government and any member thereof, and any person or persons or corporations, touching the securing of the construction in British Columbia of a railway from Butte Inlet to Vancouver, Pass and the Puget system on Vancouver Island.

Mr. Helmecken presumed there would be no opposition to this from the government, as he had made the statement in the King's speech, while the statement had been made that a railway contract had been signed by Mackenzie & Mann, but not by the government. He was asked the history of these negotiations, and said the country stood against the refusal of the government to bring down their papers. He referred to the renewed "solicitations