

the Minister of the Interior. Here is room for a conflict of authority which, under some circumstances, would be sure to develop. The choice of a commissioner has fallen on Mr. Wm. Ogilvie, whose services in the pioneer surveys have been invaluable, and if his capacity for administration in a large way has yet mainly to be tested it is probable that in all but unforeseen cases he will act under instructions. Beyond doubt Mr. Ogilvie has many of the qualities necessary for the successful discharge of the duty confided to him. The Commissioner's council consists of Judge McGuire of the Superior Court of the Yukon; Mr. Wade, who will be legal adviser to the council as well as a member; Lieut. Steele of the Mounted Police, and Mr. Joseph E. Girouard, M.P.P., of Arthabasca, who succeeds Mr. Wade as land registrar.

Mr. Ogilvie is distinguishable from the ruck of the public officers who have hitherto done duty in the Yukon district in having been free from the self-seeking which, with some of the others, took a questionable form. One of the complaints made against the old Family Compact, in the early days of Upper Canada (Ontario), was that they used their positions in the public service to secure grants of valuable lands for themselves and their relatives. If the practice was wrong then it is wrong now. At all times it has been difficult to prevent Government surveyors spiriting away choice locations of which they got official knowledge; what is now happening in the Klondyke is the repetition of an ancient abuse. A residence at Dawson City is as nearly comparable to a sojourn in the City of Dis as anything on earth can be, and if we send officers there and expect them to resist temptation, the least we can do is to give them a remuneration that will compensate for the sacrifices they make and the fortunes which we expect them to refuse to pick up.

When the Canadian Premier asked Du Bosc, late of the Spanish legation at Washington, to depart from Canada, he must have acted on the belief that he had good grounds for doing so. To this request Du Bosc replied that he had done nothing which would justify a request that he leave the country, but as he intended to leave, independent of the notice he had received, any difficulty which might have arisen out of opposition was avoided. It will be remembered that reports were current that the American Government made a charge against the members of the late Spanish legation at Washington who came here that they were directing a spy system in the United States, and some things were said to have occurred which supported the allegation.

Up to the present time, it appears that a trifle less than \$5,000,000 has been paid in dividends of operative gold or silver mines in British Columbia. These mining enterprises are in their infancy, and the number of mines which have not yet reached the stage of remunerative development is much larger than those that have. Several are at a stand-still for want of capital, and their future must be uncertain till the proper working tests are applied.

POLITICS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

In tracing the line of attack and the line of defence, it may be possible to get some idea of the causes which reduced or annihilated the majority of the Government of British Columbia, and perhaps turned it into a minority. Mr. Higgins, long a colleague and co-worker of Premier Turner had gone into opposition, according

to him, on a railway question, according to his enemies, because he wanted office, which, he replies, he was offered and refused years ago. The opposition made great efforts to prove that the mortgagor pays the tax intended for the mortgagee, and with some success. Expenditures made out of loans were represented, unfairly, as measuring the extent of the "deficit," which the Government was charged with piling up. The erection of the new Parliament buildings, the cost of which largely exceeded the estimate, was treated as extravagance, added to miscalculation or misrepresentation; and the facts gave color to the charge. Some heavy grants of land for railway purposes, which had been proposed, one of them amounting to 700,000 acres, had been defeated; but they figured not the less as sins of the Government. Great stress was laid on the alleged abuse of railway grants, and it is clear that the practice has got, in the result of the elections, a distinct set-back. But the really serious charge is that of members of the Government sharing in the spoils of the public resources. As the Premier defended the practice of Ministers being concerned in the management of public companies in the Province, the fact gives countenance to the charge that "the alienation of the immensely valuable Crow's Nest lands and coal measures, estimated at 250 to 350 square miles, ostensibly for railway purpose, practically for nothing, to a company a prominent member of which was and is a member of the Government." Grants made under like circumstances in evil times, in England, have frequently been resumed, and the wrong-doers not seldom lost their heads; but here, though the state crime remains a state crime, no such remedy is available. There will, there can, we presume, be no resumption, though the offending member of the Government may be tardily and mildly punished by exclusion from office. In comparison with this charge, all the others sink into insignificance, and some of them are distorted, and more or less untrue on their face. The coal lands, in face of the experience of the United States, ought not to have been alienated; but the idea of their retention by the Government was new and not generally accepted, when the alienation specially complained of was made. Henceforth there will be no excuse for the further alienation of the rich coal lands, and coal measures of British Columbia, or for that matter, of any part of Canada.

Should a change of Government take place, to what extent will the policy hitherto followed be affected? One of the charges made against the Opposition has been that it had no platform. In response, a platform of five planks was produced by an individual speaker, by which the party as a whole may or may not feel bound. Ministers may in future, as it demands, be legally bound not to use their influence in the promotion of private companies. Chinese restriction is a game of see-saw, for which there is a disposition on both sides to call, and on the part of individuals irrespective of party, to ignore in the employment of labor when interest dictates. The Opposition demands a royalty on coal in the mistaken belief that the mine-owner, not the consumer, would pay it. The abolition of the tax on mortgages, favored by mortgagees, has, by the force of accident, become the property of the Opposition. Of the abolition of the tax on miners the same seems to be true. The equalization of the mining license might, perhaps, be carried out. A redistribution of seats would remove some glaring inequalities in the size of constituencies.