

realized that they were to contribute to the revenue of the country.

Mr. Semlin had no intention of supporting this bill, although from very different motives to those the premier imagined. The premier had said that the bill needed very little said in explanation of the measure, and he certainly had not deviated very much from that course. But he had omitted one point, and that was to show some reason why it was proposed to put this additional burden on the people. In any measure of this kind introduced in any assembly, the introduction of such a measure, during Mr. Semlin's recollection, the members who endeavored to convince the members why such a course was necessary; the taxpayers should know of some reason, but the premier had given none either to the house or to the taxpayers. A few days since Mr. Semlin had asked to have this bill laid over until the estimates had been submitted to the house, and if the government had acceded to that request the house would have known what the government were going to do with the money proposed to be raised by this bill, but they would not do that; they said they must have this bill passed before they could bring down the estimates. It was safe to expect, however, that, as the government had done in the past, they would do in the future. Mr. Semlin reflected his hon. friend the attorney-general, at a meeting up country, boasting that he was proud of belonging to this government, and saying that they were going to pursue the policy they had been following. Therefore, if there was any confidence could the house have in their making a right use of the additional powers proposed by this bill. There were many things to be considered. For instance, there was the agent-general in London; it costs considerable to keep that office, and with what benefit to the province? Do the hon. gentlemen composing the government propose to increase the burdens of the people in order to retain that office? At least it would not be known whether it was intended to keep the office, or to let it go until the estimates were brought down. Then there was this board of health, which was very expensive, or would be if it is carried out. There is also no mention of that being abolished. No object to the expenditure of money in public works, but gentlemen opposite when they began retrenchment made public works suffer; they cut at the roots instead of lopping off the useless branches. The country is not in a position to bear any increased burden. The government had been increasing the salaries of civil servants and ministers, and going into all sorts of fancy missions on the supposition that the country was able to stand it with their expansive revenue and expansive treasury; but conditions had changed since five years ago. And now, when we see that the country is in anything but a prosperous condition; when the mortgagee is foreclosing on the mortgagor; when the debtor is unable to pay his creditor, the government comes down with a proposal to increase the taxation. This increase of taxation is equivalent to another loan, and it is safe to say that, if the government have shown that they have not judgment to spend the money of the last loan, they should not spend the proceeds of this increased taxation properly. If they do not propose to change their course of conduct, Mr. Semlin was not prepared to entrust the government with this new charge. There was an instance of the untenable position of their position in the matter of the land laws. So that, supposing, when the estimates are brought down, there is shown a desire to retrench, can the government be trusted to stick to it? Mr. Semlin had some recollection of a similar retrenchment on a previous occasion, and hardly had the members turned their backs on the legislature before a number of clerks were at once taken back. There were the buildings outside.

Hon. Mr. Turner—the buildings are going on all right; aren't they?

Mr. Semlin—The buildings are going on all right, but can the country afford those buildings? Continuing, Mr. Semlin said that without further delay in the house he would express his intention of voting against this bill, not perhaps because it was inequitable, and there was a great deal of inequity in it, but because he had no confidence in the gentlemen opposite to justify his putting this trust in their hands.

Hon. Col. Baker said that no one likes to be taxed and it was certainly a sign of courage on the part of the government to bring down a bill providing for an increase of taxation. The leader of the opposition had asked for a reason of this increase. All would acknowledge that with the increase in population it was necessary to increase the burden of taxation. Then, as Mr. Semlin had said, the per capita taxation here is less than in many other places similarly situated, such as Washington, Oregon, California and other places. The necessity of developing the resources of the province called for this increase of taxation. It would be very easy, by a parsimonious policy to carry on the affairs of the province, but that was not the intention of this government; they wanted to develop the country. As to the accusation of extravagance, every other province is paying very much more for their agent-general's office than British Columbia. Col. Baker defended the policy of having an agent-general in London. If the hon. gentlemen opposite had only been in London and seen the good that this office can do, they would certainly have a better idea of the office.

Mr. Semlin—You want a microscope to find it out.

Col. Baker proceeded to show that immense good had been done by Mr. Vernon in lecturing in places in England. The work on the parliament buildings was a great help to the working people these hard times. As to the mining tax, Col. Baker considered it a fair and easy one. In view of the fact that the government had considerable work to do, he would move the adjournment of the debate.

The house then adjourned.

NOTICES OF MOTION.
Mr. Macpherson—To introduce a bill to amend the benevolent societies act, 1891.

Mr. Forster—For a return showing all the evidence taken at the inquest held on the body of John R. Reilly, who was killed by a fall of rock while in the employ of the Union Colliery Company, Comox, together with all papers and correspondence in connection with the same, and the verdict of the jury.

Mr. Helmecken—To introduce a bill to

amend the liquor license regulation act, 1891.

Major Muter—For a return showing all timber leases granted in Cowichan-Alberni district to date, with acreage, and duration and terms of lease; also how far each lessee has carried out the terms of lease.

Dr. Walkem—For a return showing the fees and emoluments of sheriffs for 1895.

Dr. Walkem—For a return respecting the appointment of guardians of the estate of H. M. Cooper, and the amount of security demanded from each.

Mr. Graham—To insert in Columbia and Western Railway Company bill: "Provided, however, that should any other company build a line from Penticton so as to intersect this company's line at any point, this company shall allow them running powers between the point where such intersection takes place and the eastern terminus of the road, on such conditions, including reciprocal concessions as to running powers, as may be agreed upon; or on failure of agreement between the two companies, on such conditions, as to facilities and compensation as may be determined by arbitrators, to be appointed according to the provisions of the 'Common law procedure act, 1854.'"

Capt. Irving—To insert in the Lillooet, Fraser River and Cariboo Gold Fields, Limited, bill: "4. On making application for leases, the company shall not be limited or confined to any area, and the gold commissioner to whom such application is made may, with the approval of the lieutenant-governor-in-council, grant such application, notwithstanding that the lands so applied for may exceed in area the number of acres to which such leases are now limited by law."

QUESTIONS TO BE PUT.
Mr. Sward—Do the government take any precautions to see that the average actual daily attendance at the public schools in cities, on which the government pay the per capita grant, is confined to the actual daily attendance of pupils of school age?

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was committed and subsequently reported complete with amendments.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. Sward—For a return showing for what reason 480,000 acres were reserved in the southeast corner of the province, and 240,000 at Elk river, Mitchell Creek, and Coal Creek, in East Kootenay; what the government purposes in connection with the railway reserves, and what the railway reserves were referred to in the hon. the chief commissioner's answer to a question on the 4th March; also the authority under which such reserves were made.

Hon. Col. Baker—To move on consideration report on education act amendment bill to insert the following in the present section on the same subject: "Any person, being a British subject of the full age of twenty-one years, and a resident householder, or a resident freholder in a school district, and who is otherwise qualified by this act to vote at any election of school trustees in the said school district, and the wife of such householder or freeholder, shall be eligible to be elected or to seek election as school trustee, provided always, that the wife of an acting school trustee shall not be eligible for election."

Hon. Col. Baker—To introduce a bill entitled "An Act relating to gold and other minerals, excepting coal."

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