

RAILWAY CONNECTION AND LOCAL POLITICS.

The Colonist, in a fit of impotent rage which doth not comport well with its wares and the dignity that ought to fit like a garment upon a journal of its assured position, proclaims its belief that the worst enemy Victoria has today is the Daily Times, owned by Hon. William Templeman, Minister of Inland Revenue, and the representative of this city in the Dominion House of Commons. It is scarcely necessary for us to attempt to demonstrate that our most irascible and irrational contemporary is entirely wrong. The worst enemy Victoria has now, we ever had, is the politician or newspaper writer who practices deceit upon the people of this city and endeavors to humbug or bunco them into following politicians who will hesitate at nothing for the purpose of securing their support. During the campaign which preceded the return of the McBride government to power we contended, and cited many facts in support of our position, that the government of Hon. Richard McBride during its three year term of office had not only done nothing whatever to prove that it was friendly towards Victorians, but that it had demonstrated beyond peradventure that it was actuated by feelings of deep enmity towards this city. We say still that there was not a single measure brought forward by the federal government or by the people of the city of Victoria during the three years mentioned considered for the advancement of the welfare of the city that the McBride government did not oppose and endeavor to strangle. At the same time we were agreeable, in the light of the decision of the majority of the people on the day of February, to bury the past and to judge the McBride government by its actions in the future. We are still in that frame of mind, if the Conservative organ will permit us to forget the past and to look forward hopefully, if not actually sanguinely, to the course of the government in the future. We deprecate sincerely all attempts to raise mischievous sectional issues. But it must in all candor be said that in the light of the Colonist's insistent fury at every allusion to the issues raised by itself during the campaign we fear there is just as little reason to look forward cheerfully to what the government will do as there is to congratulate Victorians on the organ's course in the past.

In the midst of its ravings the organ of the government asserts it is little short of criminal to attempt to drag the question of rail connection with the Mainland into local politics. There is no doubt that in this matter our contemporary is right. But if there be anything criminal in such an attempt, the lapse of a few days does not mitigate in the slightest degree the extent of the criminality. We are not particularly desirous of an extended controversy on the matter. We shall merely content ourselves with quotations from the columns of the Colonist in proof of our contention that it is not us but the organ of the government that has been guilty of criminal conduct in respect of this issue. If the passages we take the liberty of again reproducing do not mean that the return of McBride, Davey, Behnen and Thomson would have the effect of preparing the way for, if not actually consummating rail connection with the Mainland, what in the name of common sense do they predicate? For example, consider the following sentences as clearing the course for a more explicit statement:

"The trade of the northern part of this province and the traffic to be developed by the new railways to be constructed across British Columbia can be brought to Victoria and Vancouver Island by the adoption of a wise policy. That policy in a nutshell is the establishment of rail connection between this city and the Mainland. To secure this we need a union of all local interests."

Then followed this appeal: "The time has come for the people of Victoria to act. This declaration by Mr. McInnes endangers the whole future of the city. We have worked here for years to secure rail connection with the Mainland, and now we are asked to support men who have been pledged to build up Vancouver at the expense of Victoria's most cherished expectations."

Afterwards we have the following as differentiating between the position of the Liberal and the Conservative candidates: "We are beginning to understand why the Liberal candidates in this city have refrained from saying anything in regard to the development of Vancouver Island and the establishment of rail connection with the Mainland. Mr. Eberts, on every occasion upon which he has addressed a public audience during this campaign, has declared that he will work for this connection. We have wondered why it was that on not a single occasion have the Liberal candidates declared themselves on this subject."

And: "The people of Victoria should act in such a manner that this disloyalty of the Liberal candidates to their city will be frustrated. The Liberals of Saanich, of the Islands, of Esquimalt and of Cowichan, should do the same. Let the people of Vancouver Island assert themselves. There is more of this province than is contained in the city

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on the shore of Burrard Inlet." Now the people of Victoria, of Saanich and of Cowichan have risen to the appeal and have acted. They have performed their part. The McBride government has been handsomely sustained as a result of their action. If they had voted as they did three years ago the government would have been defeated. Surely the Colonist should be gratified beyond measure at the thought that its advice has been accepted, that the desire for rail connection should have closed the eyes of the electors to the record of the government, and that all that now remains is for the Premier to prove that he has forgotten the past and to give a practical demonstration such as it promised of his friendly feelings towards Victoria. But if it should turn out that the junior organ of the government really expresses the true sentiments of the administration that this cry for rail connection is a pleasing fantasy of the senior organ's imagination, what will the people think who so nobly responded to the appeal?

A WORD WITH CORRESPONDENTS.

We are agreeable to allowing correspondents a good deal of latitude in the discussion of matters in which the people generally are deeply interested. The views of our readers, when expressed in temperate language and in conformity with the generally accepted rules of controversy, are usually a most attractive feature of a newspaper. But we must be permitted to draw the line most determinedly when contributors ask to be permitted to attribute, under the cover of anonymity, all kinds of personal and sinister motives to the public acts of representatives of the people. We have before us a communication signed "Citizen" purporting to deal with the proposition to submit to a referendum the grant made by the city council to the Tourist Association, and which we believe travels far beyond the bounds of legitimate criticism. Our correspondents may suspect that the motives actuating the members of the council who oppose the grant in question are based upon a desire to gain cheap popularity and perhaps pave the way for the gratification of personal ambition. But he cannot possibly be sure of what is at the back of the minds of the aldermen in question. And even if we suspect motives, is it unusual for public men to endeavor to achieve popularity by deference to the will of the majority? After all, there will always be differences of opinion respecting the intrinsic merits of schemes brought forward in the council and elsewhere for the ostensible purpose of promoting the welfare of the public. Why not, therefore, accept in good faith such measures as are set before us, discuss them temperately, dissect them dispassionately, expose their weaknesses if there are any, and endeavor to shape them in conformity with our views? Besides, there are others than aldermen and public men who are but too prone to view measures from a personal rather than from a public standpoint. There are limits to the latitude that ought to be allowed anonymous correspondents, and we purpose keeping our fences up.

Reverting for a moment to the question of the criminality of attempting to project real connection into local politics, on election day the Colonist adjured the electors in the following words: "Vote to-day for D. M. Eberts. He will fight the battle for the establishment of rail connection with the mainland." Was this a criminal appeal? If it was, who is the criminal, the newspaper in which it appeared, or Mr. Eberts who authorized it?

Nightcaps are coming into fashion again, and the fad of the openwindow is responsible. We suspect, however, that the cunning mind of a shrewd milliner (if nightcaps really come from the deft fingers of milliners), is at the bottom of this latest fashionable vagary.

MR. SPEAKER.

We confess to a feeling of disappointment at the selection of Hon. D. M. Eberts as speaker of the Legislature. Not that we believe Mr. Speaker will not be absolutely fair in his rulings, nor that he will not uphold in every respect the high traditions of his important office, but that we had hoped to listen to some of his impassioned speeches on the floor of the house. As old-time members of the Legislature know, the member for Saanich is a perfect demon in debate when thoroughly aroused from his constitutional lethargy. He can lead even Mr. Hawthornthwaite, the avowed red revolutionist of British Columbia, in making the gargoyles cock their ears and take notice when he is provoked into getting upon his feet. But by the unanimous decision of the House, Mr. Eberts is going to be compelled to sit still and listen to the maiden efforts of nearly a score of new members, and to the owlike platitudes of many of the old ones. Besides, when the trend of the debates creates reminiscences in the richly-stored mind of Mr. Speaker, upon whom is he going to unload his stories? There will be no one to incline an ear, unless it be individuals in the corps of Puck-like pages, and it would scarcely be in keeping with the dignity of the House for Mr. Speaker to be observed holding intellectual communion with the boys. It does not appear to us therefore, that the Premier ought to have made arrangements to take Mr. Eberts into the cabinet. Such a disposition would have been more in consonance with the ability of Mr. Speaker, and would undoubtedly have been more acceptable to the members of the Legislature and to the public habits, who are quite as regular in their attendance at the debates as the representatives themselves. Still, we suppose the Premier disposes, and it is for the rest of us to adjust ourselves to his inflexible will. So there is nothing for us to do but join our esteemed contemporary in congratulations to Mr. Eberts upon his appointment, and to felicitate the House generally upon the selection of such an experienced and accomplished parliamentarian to preside over its debates.

RAILWAY CONNECTION.

During the recent provincial election campaign the Colonist supplied the very strongest evidence that it regarded the subject of railway connection with the Mainland as a distinctly provincial issue. It called upon the electors of Victoria and of the whole Island in the strongest possible language to support the Conservative candidates in order to secure this railway connection.

The proof of this proposition will be found in one or two sample of appeals to the electors appearing in the editorial columns of our contemporary which we take the liberty of reproducing, just to refresh its memory and to remind our representatives of what is expected of them. Under the impressive headline of "Victorians, do your duty," appeared the following: "The trade of the northern part of this province and the traffic to be developed by the new railways to be constructed across British Columbia can be brought to Victoria and Vancouver Island by the adoption of a wise policy. That policy in a nutshell is the establishment of rail connection between this city and the Mainland. To secure this we need a union of all local interests."

And again, as a further evidence of how strongly the Colonist regarded the question as a local issue, consider the following:

"The time has come for the people of Victoria to act. This declaration by Mr. McInnes endangers the whole future of the city. We have worked here for years to secure rail connection with the Mainland, and now we are asked to support men who have been pledged to build up Vancouver at the expense of Victoria's most cherished expectations."

"We are beginning to understand why the Liberal candidates in this city have refrained from saying anything in regard to the development of Vancouver Island and the establishment of rail connection with the Mainland. Mr. Eberts, on every occasion upon which he has addressed a public audience during this campaign, has declared that he will work for this connection. We have wondered why it was that on not a single occasion have the Liberal candidates declared themselves on this subject."

And here are some more specimens from the same paper: "The people of Victoria should act in such a manner that this disloyalty of the Liberal candidates to their city will be frustrated. The Liberals of Saanich, of the Islands, of Esquimalt and of Cowichan, should do the same. Let the people of Vancouver Island assert themselves. There is more of this province than is contained in the city on the shore of Burrard Inlet."

Then comes the grand finale by the Colonist:

"To-day let the people of Victoria vote for Victoria. A vote for Messrs. Cameron, Drury, Hall and McInnes is a vote to advance Vancouver in preference to all other places in British Columbia, including Victoria."

From the Colonist's standpoint the people of Victoria did certainly vote for Victoria. Not only Victoria city, but

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the Island, gave the McBride government good measure—heaped up, running over measure—an idea the light of the utterances of the Colonist the time has now arrived for Premier McBride and his government to do their duty to Victoria. If the Colonist newspaper and the Conservative party in this city wish to stand before the public clothed in a shred of consistency and sincerity, they will now demonstrate by their actions that they meant what they said when they appealed to the electors for their support, and received in turn their support and an overwhelming majority of members from the southern portion of Vancouver Island.

MR. BRYCE'S VISIT.

The British representative at Washington is going to visit Canada. This announcement implies such a departure from the ordinary ambassadorial procedure as to be considered of special significance by well-informed people on both sides of the line. Mr. Bryce was received officially and privately with open arms when he set his foot on the shores of this great continent. The cordiality of Mr. Bryce's welcome was largely due to the fact that he had previously paid a visit to the United States, had carefully studied government and private institutions, and had written a most appreciative work thereon. He had predicted that, notwithstanding manifest weaknesses and shortcomings in the American system of government, great things had been accomplished, and that still greater heights of attainment would yet be reached by the enterprising and aggressive people of the great republic. In short, Mr. Bryce, for a plain-spoken man in a critical role, had flattered the American people and naturally the American people were pleased with him and could not neglect an opportunity to give practical proof of their appreciation.

Now Mr. Bryce has come to Washington in an official capacity. His relations with the government of the United States must have a great deal to do with matters in which Canada is vitally interested. In fact, practically all the subjects of diplomatic negotiations between Great Britain and the United States have reference to subjects in which Canada is concerned. Being a thoroughly conscientious man, a man most scrupulous in acquainting himself with all the details of a subject before venturing to deal with it all, Mr. Bryce has evidently determined to study the history of latter-day relations between Canada and the United States from the Canadian point of view, before undertaking

act officially on our behalf.

Another significant fact in connection with this movement for the admission of all matters in dispute between the two nations is that all the overtures of late years have come from the United States. Canadians, having made repeated efforts to reach an understanding with their neighbors, and having found the points of divergence so wide that there appeared to be no possibility of bringing them together, had retired from the field entirely and dismissed the questions from their minds. As there were no matters in dispute that appeared likely to strain the amicable relations that existed between the two countries, our government did not consider there were any good reasons why we should abandon any points in our position for the purpose of reaching a permanent agreement. However, the late visit to Canada of Secretary Root and the prospective visit of Ambassador Bryce, appear to indicate that both the United States and Great Britain are particularly anxious that all questions that in the future might imperil the cordial relations between the two nations shall be finally disposed of. It is the evident belief that now, when there is not a single cloud on the diplomatic horizon, is the time to take occasion by the hand. There is not the slightest doubt that the representatives of Canada will do all in their power, short of sacrificing any of our unquestioned rights, to clear off the slate. Whether the question of trade relations will be one of the subjects of negotiation is a matter yet to be determined. We doubt very much whether it will be, because the old Dingleyism has upon the popular imagination in the United States at the present time appears to constitute an insuperable obstacle to that.

In the meantime the British ambassador, having decided upon a new and highly desirable departure from the traditional course of the embassy, will receive a very cordial welcome to Canada, and the outcome of his sojourn amongst us and his study of Canadian sentiment will be awaited with a considerable amount of interest.

The lady who holds the scales of justice in the United States is receiving many blows on her bandaged optics these days. The curtain will soon descend on the farce that has held the boards in New York for several weeks. There are minor legal comedies being produced in all sections of the great republic. In San Francisco Mayor Schmitz and his strong municipal supporter, Mr. Rueff, are about to appear in a new, side-splitting burlesque. We wonder how long it will be before the American people take a firm grip of

the law in its vicious modern development and reform it.

In Manitoba the watchmen called from the walls, but the people heeded not. Premier Roblin has been confined in power by a decreased majority for another four years. The province is prosperous, and the underminded elector shut his eyes to everything else, including the obvious cause of all the prosperity.

It seems we should not have suspected General Botha's loyalty to British institutions. The new premier of the Transvaal has sent the following message to "the people of Great Britain," who appear also to have their doubts: "British supremacy will be safer in the hands of the Boers than in those of cosmopolitan capitalists. We have fought and suffered grievously, more than anybody else in this country. That is past, and no one is so foolish as to want it over again. The questions of the flag and of supremacy have been settled for all time. At Vereeniging I signed the treaty of peace. I then solemnly accepted what is so dear to you—Your King and your flag. They are now our king and our flag." After all, we have additional proof of the old proposition that the best colonial policy is to trust the people of the colonies. It has served Great Britain well. Other nations have tried a different system, and their experience has been far from encouraging.

The Colonist scored a "coop" on Sunday morning by imparting the startling news to its readers that the Victoria Daily Times is owned "by Hon. Wm. Templeman, Minister of Inland Revenue and representative of this city in the Dominion House of Commons." Having cleared this interesting matter up, will our enterprising contemporary kindly lift the veil that

hides another mystery, and tell us who is the owner of the Victoria Daily Colonist published five lawful mornings and one unlawful morning in every week?

DEAD AT HIS POST.

Signalman Expires While on Duty in His Box.

The driver of a crowded passenger train from Preston to Acornington, about eleven o'clock at night, recently found the signal at Taylor street bridge cabin, between Mill Hill and Blackburn, against him, and after waiting a short time, he sounded his whistle to give the signalman warning of his arrival.

Getting no response, he sent his fireman to the cabin to see what was the matter, and the latter hurriedly returned with the news that the man was dead.

The deceased, a man of forty-five years, named Edwin Greenhalgh, had been in the employ of the company for a considerable time. About twelve months ago he was off work for some fourteen weeks suffering from pneumonia. After that he was allowed to take less responsible duties, and latterly he had taken charge of the Taylor street bridge cabin.

The man was sitting on the floor with his back against a lever. There were bruises on the cheek and knee, and a doctor who was summoned, attributed death to a fit and expressed the opinion that the bruises had been caused by falling.

MUTINEERS EXECUTED.

St. Petersburg, March 11.—Twelve sailors belonging to the Russian cruiser Enrof Bukhara, who were tried by court martial for mutiny at the Sveaborg outbreak, have been sentenced, five of them to imprisonment with hard labor in the mines for life, and the remainder to varying periods.

LOCAL NEWS.

—Returning from her the west coast of the I. S. Quadra pulled in to Fisheries department wharf.

—The Ladies' Aid church, Victoria West, annual concert on March 12. The program has been collected in aid of the will be taken.

—The marble quarries sound are to be opened Nootka Marble Quarries. Initial shipment will be United States. Men w sary winches, derricks, sent to open up the quarries.

—At a meeting of the Association held Thursday was unanimously nominated for the bench to the Columbia Law Society from the election for which the 26th of this month.

—The Far West Lodge, a farewell social to Mess Oliver and Hill, who left immediately on a tour of California, under the Feely Acrobatic Trio.

—At the inquest on the Neils, Moose, held by Cor Hart, the jury returned found drowned. No part than those reported in Times were learned.

—The Cowichan Lake between Duncan and Cowichan was resumed March 25th. A daily service will be maintained until the summer. It is & N. railway will issue tickets.

—The announcement of the order for a new ship, the Lieut. Governor long had in contemplation of a vessel to take the Thistle, says he has not take that step.

—By the kind invitation R. Harris, the ladies of Our Lord are holding popular social teas on from 3 to 6 in her residence corner of Superior street. Walk. A musical program.

—The sixth annual Victoria International St. Association is holding a biennial Methodist church on Tuesday and Wednesday 26th and 27th. All inter-day school work should be as a good programme has pared.

—The Y. M. C. A. are securing Rev. W. H. B. New Westminster, for men's meeting Sunday.

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