

The Colonist.

MONDAY, MAY 16, 1898.

THE LOAN BILL.

The substantial majority which the Loan bill received on its second reading will doubtless secure its passage through the other stages without difficulty. We regret that Mr. Hunter felt unable to vote for the bill, but his defection was more than offset by the generous support of Mr. Higgins and the decision of Mr. Williams to accept the measure after the amendment had failed to carry. Mr. Williams alone of the three Vancouver members realized how very much in earnest the people of that city are in their desire that nothing should be done to prevent a beginning being made at once on the railway to the Yukon. It was a matter of surprise that some of the other opposition members did not take the same course. Nothing is more certain, than that Mr. Foster's constituents, who will profit by the railway, desired the Loan bill carried; yet he opposed it with all the bitterness in his power. The same observation holds good of the other members from the Fraser constituencies, except perhaps Mr. Kennedy, who had such justification for his course as the vote of a so-called public meeting affords. The province and especially the coast section is to be greatly congratulated at the success of the bill in the most critical stage.

PARTY LINES.

Some misguided Liberals are calling upon their friends to divide the province upon Dominion party lines at the next election. By what process of reasoning they expect to convince the people that opposition to the Hon. Mr. Turner is synonymous with Liberalism, we are at a loss to determine. Who leads the opposition in the legislature? Mr. Semlin, and if there is an out-and-out Conservative in the province of British Columbia it is Charles Semlin. Who is the first lieutenant of the opposition leader? It is Mr. Cotton, and he is not simply a Conservative, but a double-distilled Tory of the most antiquated type. Claiming equal honor with Mr. Cotton in leading the opposition to innumerable defeats is Mr. Williams and he is a Conservative of the same pattern as Mr. Semlin. Mr. Sword, the most persistent and insistent man in the whole opposition party, is a Conservative from the ground up, in which respect he mates well with that determined oppositionist, Mr. Graham. Mr. Vedder is, we understand, a Conservative. Messrs. Kelle, Foster, McPherson, Kidd, Hume and Kennedy are Liberals; but we imagine it would be possible to cross the house and find just as many Liberals who do not recognize Mr. Semlin as their leader. The fact of the matter is that the large majority of the members of the local house are Conservatives. No one familiar with British Columbia politics will be surprised at this. The Liberals in the house are almost equally divided between the two parties. From this it appears that in the past party lines have not been recognized in local affairs, and that neither the gentlemen who sit on the right of Mr. Speaker nor those who sit on his left can claim in any sense to represent either of the Dominion parties. It is purely accidental that a majority of the government supporters are Conservatives in Dominion politics. They were not elected because they were Conservatives, any more than the Liberals in the house were elected because they were Liberals. To talk therefore about running the forthcoming elections upon federal lines is to introduce something wholly new and entirely without warrant. The people do not want anything of the kind.

RULES OF THE HOUSE.

The Colonist has on several occasions referred to the rules followed in the house and it is impressed more and more with the need of some important changes. The debate over the Loan bill shows wherein the rules are weak. Mr. Semlin moved an amendment and the house proceeded to discuss it. Mr. Speaker, acting under the rules, endeavored to confine the members to the discussion of the amendment only, although, as Col. Baker said, it was impossible to discuss the amendment without dealing at the same time with the original motion. Mr. Kidd, in the course of his remarks, spoke of the Kootenay railways, but was called to order by Mr. Speaker because he was travelling outside of the amendment. At length, after every member had spoken the amendment was put and lost. Immediately the discussion was resumed where it had left off four days before, and every member felt called upon to speak again. In confining the discussion as he did, Mr. Speaker undoubtedly acted within the rules. Our point is not that he did wrong, but that the rules are wrong. They promote long debate and prevent thorough discussion. Our suggestion is that the rules should be changed so that when an amendment is moved both the amendment and the original motion shall be open to discussion, and that no member who speaks after the amendment is moved shall be allowed to speak a second time, but that members who have spoken before the amendment is moved shall be allowed to speak to the amendment. Let us apply this rule to the debate on the Loan bill and see how it would work. The Premier had spoken when Mr. Semlin moved the amendment. Necessarily he confined himself solely to his own resolution. Mr. Semlin spoke both to the original resolution and his amendment. Both the original resolution and the amendment were then before the house and it would have been far better to discuss them together than to endeavor to sever them. After every member had spoken who desired, the Premier would

have the right of closing the debate, when he could speak to the amendment, or he could be allowed to speak solely to the amendment at an earlier stage in the discussion without losing his right to the general reply. If this rule were adopted, after the Premier's general reply the vote would have been taken on the amendment, and when that was defeated, upon the original motion, whereupon the whole matter would have been disposed of. It may be said that this would prevent the introduction of an amendment to an amendment, but we are not sure that anything would be lost even if that were the case, as it need not be, for the rule could be modified to meet such a case. We think members of the house will bear us out in saying that the present rule is inimical to the speedy disposal of business.

THE PARTITION OF CHINA.

Great Britain being now entitled to the possession of Wai-Hai-Wei it, becomes of interest to inform ourselves of the new aspect of affairs on the other side of the ocean. Before attempting a description of the situation, it may be well to remind readers that they will better appreciate the altered condition of things if they cease to think of China as the Far East and regard it as the New West. As surely as "the star of empire" winged across the westward across America so it has passed across the Pacific and stands above the cradle of the most ancient extant civilization. The wise men from the East, who speak English, are following it, impelled by forces beyond their control. The United States is about to occupy the Philippines. The nation had no thought of doing anything of the kind, and any more than Great Britain had no thought of taking possession of Wai-Hai-Wei. But events were stronger than the policy of the two governments and they find themselves forced to take a position in regard to the Pacific coast of Asia very far removed from anything they had contemplated.

Referring especially to Wai-Hai-Wei, mention may first be made of the location of this very important point. Every one at all familiar with the geography of Eastern Asia knows that the Korean peninsula extends in a general southern direction from the continent for a distance of five hundred miles. Between it and the mainland of China is a great expanse of water called the Yellow Sea. The northern prolongation of this sea is the Korean Gulf, which in its turn is prolonged to the West where it is called the Gulf of Pe-Chi-Li. Separating the Gulf of Pe-Chi-Li from the Yellow Sea is a large peninsula called Shang-Tung. On the northern shore of this peninsula and at the very entrance of the gulf is the new British possession. On the other side of the gulf and a little further from the ocean is Port Arthur, which the Russians have recently acquired by lease. At the northern extremity of the gulf and still further from the ocean than Port Arthur, stands Kaio-Chow, the port which the Germans also hold under lease. To better understand the situation it is necessary to know that Peking is not far from the shore of the gulf. The three great European powers have therefore set themselves down in positions where they are within convenient reach of the Chinese capital. So far honors are even. But with their usual astuteness British capitalists have stolen a march upon the governments and have obtained certain valuable mineral concessions in the Shang-Si, which lies in the hinterland of Peking. Going westward from Wai-Hai-Wei, the traveller will pass through the province of Shang-Tung and Chi-Chi to Shang-Si. Peking is situated in Chi-Chi. That is to say the imperial headquarters is between a British naval station and a province in which the British have large and valuable concessions. Coupled with these concessions is the right to build a railway from the coast to the mines in Shang-Si. This means that the British "sphere of influence," to use the phrase applied to the partition of Africa, extends from the ocean to the mountains separating Chius proper from the great region known as Mongolia. This is a commanding position; but its possession imposes the great responsibility of preventing Russian and German encroachment. The first effect of the new arrangement will be the recognition of British influence as paramount by the rulers of the provinces which the railway will intersect, and we need not be surprised if this is followed by the inauguration of a strong military force under British discipline. Gordon made soldiers out of the Chinese, and we remember how, to use the language of Kipling, Sergeant Whats-His-Name "made a mummy fight," so we need feel no surprise if some other red-coated sergeant takes the mountaineers of Shang-Si and makes soldiers out of them. If this is done it will not be to antagonize the provincial government or offend the imperial authorities. On the contrary, the governors of the provinces will feel their semi-independence is the better secured by the existence of a genuine fighting force, and the Emperor will feel his throne more solid if he knows that he can count upon men who are versed in European methods of warfare. Meanwhile a period of great commercial and industrial activity will be inaugurated in China.

THE BURDEN OF THE LOAN.

The railways contemplated by the loan bill either will be built or they will not be. If they are not built, the province will not have to pay the subsidies. The opposition says that neither the road from the Coast to Penticton nor that from Bute Inlet to Quesnelle will be built. The mileage of these two pieces of road is 400. This at \$4,000 a mile comes to \$1,840,000. The total amount contemplated by the bill to be paid in aid of railways is \$4,160,000. If \$1,840,000 of this will never be called for, it follows that the only burden which the province will have to assume on account of railways of this nature is \$2,320,000. Of this \$1,600,000 is not likely to occasion any charge at all after a few years, and may be refunded in a short time. This leaves the amount which the province is likely to be asked to give without receiving either interest or principal back again, \$720,000. This is how the matter stands when full effect is given to the opposition arguments. Yet those gentlemen and their newspapers insist that the loan bill will burden the taxpayers with \$5,000,000 of debt. If this amount is to be added to the debt, that is \$5,000,000, it means that 1,040 miles will be added to our provincial railway system. If this is done, it province by the increase of the provincial subsidy, the taxation and 4 per cent return from the Coast-Teslin road and the personal tax on the increased population will pay all charges on the loan and leave a very comfortable balance to the credit of the province.

But is it any wonder that guarantee the people who are incurring this large liability have that the construction of the proposed railways will lead to such an increase in population. Let us go a little into details. If a railway is built from English Bluff to Penticton, a town of some importance will certainly be built where the road comes to the Coast and another where connection is made with the line to Victoria. If the road is built from Bute Inlet to Quesnelle a town will certainly be built at the head of Bute Inlet and another at Quesnelle. The latter is rendered all the more certain because Quesnelle will be a point of departure for steamers plying on the upper Fraser. When the Coast-Teslin road is built there will certainly be a town at the Coast terminus, another at the crossing of the Stikine and another at Teslin Lake. That is, there will certainly be seven towns built as the result of the construction of the railways. Averaging these towns at 3,000 people each we get 21,000. If we estimate that the villages and stations which will grow up along the 1,040 miles of railway will have a population averaging 20 to each mile of road, we will get sufficient people to swell the estimated increase to 41,000, which leaves only 9,000 to be provided by the settlement of farming lands and the opening of new mining districts. We are not making any claim that the figures just given are accurate, but simply cite them as showing the basis upon which the estimate of an additional population of fifty thousand in three years, as the result of the construction of 1,040 miles of railway through a producing country, is made. The figures are more likely to be exceeded than to prove excessive.

We have heard much of what Kootenay has done for British Columbia and what it will do in the future. Strong as is the language generally employed, large as are the anticipations indulged in, we do not believe the case has been overstated. Indeed, we do not think it is possible to overstate the future greatness of Kootenay as a wealth-producer. But we will make a great mistake if we fail

building of the railway. On May 9th the Times used these words: "No one knows how long the gold fields will yield paying quantities and to assert, as has been done in one provincial newspaper, that 'it may be taken for granted that the gold fields of the North will be permanent' is not only nonsense and a very unprecise use of language, but is wicked and misleading." If such language in an article opposing a subsidy to the railway does not mean that the gold fields do not warrant the building of a railway, we would like to know what it does mean. The Times also asks who owns the land around where the terminus of the line is to be and how many of the government's friends have received a tip on the subject. We can answer this question; for we know that neither the government nor the intending contractors have any idea at what point the road will terminate. It cannot be told who owns the land at the terminus of the line and it is equally impossible that any person can have received any tip on the subject.

It will be idle to say that the present population of the province will have to bear the additional debt, because there will be a great influx of people from the great increase of new industries. If all these roads are under construction by the summer of 1901, when the next census is taken, it is reasonable to estimate that 50,000 more people will be in the province than would be here if the roads were not under construction. Such an addition to the population would mean an increase in the federal revenue of \$40,000, which will pay the interest and sinking fund upon a quarter of the whole amount proposed to be given for railways. By that time it is reasonable to suppose that the 4 per cent, to be derived from the Coast-Teslin road, and the taxes on the railway will meet the interest and sinking fund charges upon the subsidy to that road. Thus we will have \$2,600,000 of the new debt provided for, leaving \$1,560,000 to be taken care of out of the ordinary revenue of the country. This would call for \$62,400 a year; but the personal tax upon the anticipated increase of population will amount to \$75,000 for probably one half of the increase will be adult males. In other words if all the railways contemplated by the loan bill are constructed, the addition to the revenue of the

Empire with a more promising future before it than British Columbia has in view to-day. We cannot reap the fruits of these promises if we are afraid to step into the harvest field. The provincial government has given the word to advance. It has spoken at the right time. It has been spoken in the right manner. All the world will hear it. And so we say that although the assumption of responsibility to pay upwards of \$4,000,000 for railways is no light matter for this province, it is nothing to be afraid of. For ourselves we hope that every dollar provided for will be demanded for the purpose for which it is intended. If it is British Columbia will enter upon a period of unexampled prosperity and the burden, which looks so great now, will scarcely be felt when the time comes to assume it.

The public will heartily endorse the position taken by the Premier in regard to the statements made in the Times last night as to the administration of the lands and works department. The appointment of a commission before whom the person responsible for the allegations in the Times can adduce his proof is entirely proper. If the statements are true, the government must purge the department of the guilty persons; if they are false the defamer must be punished if there is any law to meet his case.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier declined to say, in response to a question in parliament, whether his ministry intended to take some steps to secure the entry of Newfoundland into the confederation. Most people would like to see the island come in; but they will not be willing to pay anything for it.

The Manitoba Free Press is authority for the statement that the Laurier ministry has awakened to a sense of the pressing importance of the Pacific cable and that it will be laid as soon as certain preliminaries can be carried out.

The invasion of Cuba is not a thing to be undertaken with a light heart, as our neighbors will doubtless find out. They must not allow themselves to be deceived by the easy victory of Manila. The greatest of all errors in warfare is to underestimate the enemy. It is said that the British railways pay four per cent upon the capital invested in them. They average pretty well. Yet the British government has not thought of taking them out of the hands of the companies. The estimated cost of the plebiscite on prohibition is \$250,000. The amount would not be too much, if there was a likelihood that the vote would settle everything. It is suggested that the reason why the Spanish admiral did not make a better show at Manila was that he was waiting until he had closed a bargain with the kinoscope people. Thirty years ago a girl-jilted Admiral Dewey for an attack of the Spanish legation at Washington. It has taken the disconsolate lover some time to get his revenge. A Spaniard named Isle is having a lot of trouble in Seattle. The Spanish Isles seems to be a source of trouble now no matter where they are. "How could Penelope marry that bow-legged man?" "She doesn't mind it; he matches her dachshund."—Chicago Record.

into the way of thinking that Kootenay represents all the New British Columbia. We must not forget that when the possibilities of Kootenay were yet an unknown quantity, those who knew most about this province claimed, and showed good grounds for claiming, that north of the line of the Canadian Pacific, in Cariboo, Cassiar and Omineca, wealthy and populous communities would be established as soon as means of communication were provided. Kootenay came upon the world as a surprise. Its present prosperity and future greatness were hardly so much a dream ten years ago, when explorers, miners and men of wide experience were uniting in the assertion that the development of British Columbia was well worthy the attention of the statesmen of Canada. The Canadian Pacific and the Spokane & Northern provided a way for prospectors to get results of greater importance, a way by which they could readily reach their discoveries with supplies and take men of capital in to see what the country was like. We have seen what the result has been. In half a dozen years more than half a score of towns have sprung up, and the output of one district alone promises to exceed \$4,000,000 in gold this year. Without railways this region would have remained as unproductive as the unknown country across the head waters of Finlay, where the Indians say "the rivers are full of yellow stones." We confess to a feeling of enthusiasm over the prospects of British Columbia, when once railway communication enables its resources to be exploited; but we do not apologize for it. What British Columbia wants is enthusiasm. From two classes of people, good Lord deliver us—the man who has made enough for his own use and opposes everything out of which his neighbors may be able to better themselves, and the man who has nothing and is afraid that some one else may get something. A country is held back by these people. British Columbia calls for the enthusiasm of youth, for it is a young country. It calls for courage for there are great prizes to be won. It calls for faith, that is intelligent faith, faith which rests upon a knowledge of what the bountiful hand of Nature has given to the province. If there are those amongst us who see lions in every path of progress, let them stand aside and permit others to advance.

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Evidence of Appeal to Dalt

(From Our Ottawa, May 15) The Dominion Commons chamber o'clock to-night house adjourned in moving the ingly of the lo obtained by his d per, who was a Clarke Wallace, esteem.

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MR. MACKEN

British Columbia Speedy Conne Pe

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MR. OGILVIE

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ITALIAN

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