

the Government's existence.

There are, however, some honest men in the Government party. The time is rapidly approaching when these honest men will have to adopt one of two courses.

They will have to either stand by the country and free it from the grasp of scoundrels who are attempting to rob the people of 900,000 acres of immensely valuable land or they will fall in with the plans of these scoundrels and prolong the alleged investigation until the legislature has adjourned. A bold stand on the part of the honest members of the House, and Wells and Eberts are done for and the Province—particularly the Kootenays—will prosper as never before; but the moment they begin to assist in the whitewashing of the land grabbers, in order to save the government, they will be as much to blame as the chief conspirator, and will suffer the same disgrace.

CANADA'S PROGRESS.

Finance Minister Fielding will have the pleasure of announcing a surplus for the current fiscal year of \$13,000,000 on consolidated fund account, or \$5,000,000 if the capital account expenditure is also deducted. This \$5,000,000 is supposed to be available for reduction of the public debt, and to be equal to the net increase in that debt for which the present government is responsible. A rapid increase of the revenue naturally tempts to increased expenditure on the part of any government, and it would be wonderful if all the expenditure were wisely inspired. For the present, at all events, there must be an addition to the country's disbursements because of the very circumstances that result in raising the income to higher figures. The population is increasing at a rate not equalled in many years past, and there appears to be every likelihood of the rate of increase being maintained, if not added to, in coming years.

In a review of the immigration season so far the Toronto Globe recently said: "No more significant sign of the times is to be observed in Canada today than the spring tide of immigration pouring into the west from Europe and from the bordering American states. The movement has reached the proportions of those great swarmings of population that in a single half-century carried the land-hungry American from the crest of the Alleghenies to the blue Pacific. The Canadian west has been discovered by the sons of men who marched in the pioneer corps of the army of civilization through Ohio and Iowa and Illinois and Nebraska, bringing peace and its arts, where before there were but the dangers of savage warfare and the solitude of the uncivilized prairie. Last year the Globe by its special correspondents described the American invasion of the west. This year the feature of the spring rush is the coming of thousands of young Englishmen eager to share in the labors and the successes attending the settlement of the prairies." It is a very encouraging circumstance for Canada that the "land hunger" is felt in so many other quarters of the earth, for it ensures some degree of steadiness in the flow of immigration. The migration of so many Americans is a distinct warning to European land-seekers that they cannot hope for much success south of the line, so Canada is practically assured of a double stream.

There is much significance in the opinions offered by the Hon. John Bookwalter, of Springfield, Ohio, an acknowledged authority on agricultural conditions. In a review of the situation he finds that land has rapidly been

interesting to know that during the past month rousing meetings held at a number of Great Britain's industrial centres, including Glasgow and Bristol, carried unanimous resolutions advocating that a preference of no less than 3 shillings per cwt. should be given to colonial food products. The interesting information is also to hand that a large party of representatives from the British houses of parliament will tour Canada next August. Needless to say these marks of attention from the British public and the statesmen of the old land will awaken a warm response in Canada, and our people will give every encouragement to the growing sympathy and interest of Great Britain.

A NEST OF TRAITORS.

The Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, in answer to a question delivered in the House last Thursday, declared that the reason for the refusal of coal and petroleum licenses in Southeast Kootenay "was a matter of government policy, as was also the maintenance of a reserve on these lands."

This was a formal reply to a formal question. The Chief Commissioner's statement was carefully and deliberately prepared. The other ministers undoubtedly knew the nature of the reply in advance of the House, and had sanctioned it; otherwise they would have objected to what the Chief Commissioner said.

The natural and only inference is that the Chief Commissioner has forced the Administration to make his iniquitous policy a government policy. This makes the other ministers just as guilty of malfeasance as is the Chief Commissioner.

It is not so surprising that Attorney-General Eberts should follow the lead of Chief Commissioner Wells, but that the premier and the other ministers, Prentice and McInnes, should permit the Government to be pledged to such a disgraceful policy is almost incredible, because it means political suicide to each of them. The people of British Columbia will not tolerate such scandalous proceedings now that they know the facts of the case and are thoroughly aroused.

Why the coal locations in the Similkameen, Nicola, Vancouver Island and Elk River districts made in accordance with the law are to be recognized, and those of Southeast Kootenay not, is not clear, except that an attempt is being made to defraud the prospectors. As we have repeatedly pointed out in these columns, THERE NEVER WAS A RESERVE ON THE COAL AND PETROLEUM LANDS OF EAST KOOTENAY. THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER HAS ADMITTED THIS IN A FORMAL STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE.

The reserve applies only to the SURFACE RIGHTS. The reserve was established for the particular benefit of the Columbia & Western railway, and a deliberate attempt was made to hand over some 900,000 acres of these lands, INCLUDING THE COAL, PETROLEUM AND TIMBER THEREON, TO THE C. P. R., but the whole scheme was exposed, and the Chief Commissioner was compelled to cancel the crown grant. The C. P. R. is completely out of it now, but the Victoria ringsters and the Crow's Nest coal monopoly are still desperately interested. If the poor prospector can be beaten out of his rights, the monopoly will be maintained and the ringsters will make thousands. Is it, then, any wonder that men of the stamp of the Chief Commissioner and the Attorney-General are making such a desperate fight?

However, as the case now stands, one minister is just as blameworthy as the other.

The questions so far asked in the

From 1872 to 1894, he held uninterrupted the office of premier of Ontario, a term unparalleled in the career of any other Canadian statesman. At its close he voluntarily retired to take a place in the Dominion cabinet forged by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and since 1895 he has been lieutenant governor of his native province. So great a political success could only have waited upon the career of a man of extraordinary ability and extremely high character. The length of his public service is most emphatic testimony to his good qualities, and opponents as well as friends have yielded him freely admiration and respect. For many years Sir Oliver's rival in Ontario politics was the present Chief Justice Meredith, an exceedingly strong and able man. It is altogether likely that Mr. Meredith would have been strong enough to overcome any weaker antagonist, for the liking and respect extended to him were but a few degrees less than those which the leader of the government drew forth.

Mr. Oliver Mowat's public service did not begin with his accession to the Ontario premiership. He entered the old Canadian parliament first in 1857, and was identified with three pre-Confederation ministers. One was the short-lived Brown-Dorion government of 1858, the second the Sanfield Macdonald-Dorion government in 1863-64, and the last the Tache coalition government, which was organized with confederation in view. He was one of the prominent figures at the Quebec conference in 1864, when the scheme of confederation was finally drawn up. In the same year he became vice-chancellor of Upper Canada, retaining the office after confederation. On the Hon. Edward Blake's retirement from the office of premier of Ontario in 1872, Sir Oliver left the bench and became the head of the government.

As already said, Sir Oliver Mowat's term of office was unprecedentedly long. It was also fairly well marked by keen contests of more than one kind, from which he invariably emerged the victor. Exceptionally memorable were the legal battles fought between him and Sir John Macdonald over the interpretation of various clauses of the B. N. A. act which involved questions of Dominion and provincial jurisdiction. The Ontario leader was always successful in these, and he came to be the acknowledged champion of provincial rights. In many ways Sir Oliver's services have been of great benefit to his own province and to the country at large, and not the least of the benefits lies in the good example he has furnished to men in public life.

THE MINING ASSOCIATION AND THE GOVERNMENT.

The leading spirits of the Provincial Mining Association are a determined lot of men with unbounded faith in the glorious future of British Columbia. The association as a body is imbued with the spirit of these men, and, as a natural result, is nothing if not thorough. There is not the slightest possibility of the association lapsing into a moribund condition. It is very much alive and its activity on behalf of the public welfare is steadily increasing. The association, although it has only been in existence a month or so, is by far the most influential body of men in the province today.

It will be remembered that at the Victoria convention of the association last February a number of important resolutions were passed calling upon the provincial government to introduce remedial legislation with regard to mining and the allied industries. With characteristic indifference Premier Prior and his political associates have practically ignored the representations made by the association. The House has been in ses-

sions and will have to reply in the House to some very important questions. The questions look innocent enough, but underlying them is another scandal which threatens to reveal conditions equally as rotten as the East Kootenay coal and petroleum outrages. The Chief Commissioner is an adept at answering awkward questions. The low cunning he displayed in his answers about East Kootenay "leases" is fresh in the public mind. But he will have to do some tall stunts tomorrow if he hopes to calm the suspicions of the House and the country at large.

The fact of the matter is that the Columbia & Western railway received a land grant. Taxation on these lands only begins ten years after their acquisition by the company. It is reported on excellent authority that the railway company has been allowed to greatly and unnecessarily delay in making its selection of lands, so as to postpone the payment of taxes to the last moment. It is also seriously suspected that both the Columbia & Western and the British Columbia Southern have obtained crown grants to thousands upon thousands of acres of valuable land regardless of the all-important fact that the law requires that all crown granted lands shall be properly designated and surveyed.

But the most interesting question of all will be, "HAVE THE BLOCKS OF LAND, PURPORTED TO BE CROWN GRANTED IN AID OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA SOUTHERN RAILWAY, EVER BEEN SURVEYED? IF NOT, WHY WERE THEY NOT SURVEYED BEFORE THE GRANT THEREOF WAS MADE?"

The Chief Commissioner's cunning will avail him, but little in his attempts to serve his masters in this matter. The Miner is informed on reliable authority that enough evidence has leaked out to make it impossible for the Victoria ringsters to cover up their tracks.

We would not be surprised if the apparently innocent query reproduced above will be the means of the province reclaiming several large tracts of very valuable lands in the Kootenays.

AN OBJECT LESSON.

Elsewhere in this issue will be found an article upon the growth of agriculture as a direct result of the development of the mining industry. Therein is produced a statement from S. F. Parish, general manager of the Le Roi, anent the effect of mining on agriculture in the State of Colorado. Colorado is the banner mining state of the Union and its soil and climate in the immediate neighborhood of the mining camps are far from being ideal from an agriculturist's point of view. Yet, because of the development of the mines and the consequent creation of a good market, farmers and gardeners have undertaken the cultivation of tracts of mountain land with a success that is really astonishing. It is an actual fact that although Colorado produces millions of dollars' worth of gold, silver, copper, iron and coal annually, the value of the products of its farms is much greater than the combined value of the state's mineral industry. Here is an object lesson for the provincial legislature. It admirably proves The Miner's oft-repeated contention that to foster and encourage the mining industry is to inaugurate the soundest and most practical method of creating general prosperity.

Wells must go.

Although he has ignored the Provincial Mining Association and created a general feeling of distrust and uneasiness, the Colonel still has his sagacious policy of Light Railways and Heavy Subsidies up his sleeve.

posing that he was not aware of the real intentions of the gang when he formed his cabinet, he certainly is now. No premier who was honest and patriotic would permit men like Wells and Eberts to retain their portfolios after knowing what they attempted to do. But we have yet to hear that Colonel Prior has called upon them to resign. By his refusal to kick them out of his cabinet he condones their offences and practically becomes a party to their schemes, regardless of the fact that he has introduced a bill in the legislature which confirms the order-in-council annulling the land grant.

Prior and his heelers are at the end of their tether. The country is disgusted with them and only too anxious to turn them out of office. This sentiment is not borne simply on account of the C. & W. steal. The administration is rotten to the core and everybody knows it. And it is as incompetent as it is rotten. Instead of attempting to promote prosperity and public confidence, it has done the very opposite. The provincial finances are in a wretched condition. The big corporations have the country by the throat. Humble citizens like the East Kootenay coal and petroleum prospectors are being kept out of their rights. The mining industry is gradually being taxed out of existence.

When Col. Prior accepted the premiership he had the opportunity of a lifetime. All he had to do to permanently entrench himself in power was to give the Province a simple, straightforward business administration and all would have been well. Instead of doing that, he has perpetuated a system of incompetence and barefaced corruption that has scandalized the world and brought thousands to the verge of ruin.

The Miner took the lead in the exposure of the East Kootenay scandals and will not cease in its efforts to right a number of great wrongs until a new and better state of affairs exist in the province. We are confident that we are on the right track and that every right-thinking man is with us.

GRANTS TO RAILWAYS.

Some interesting statistics relating to bonuses to railways were presented in parliament at Ottawa the other day. The sums paid as subsidies to railways by the federal government, divided among the different provinces, were as follows: Prince Edward Island, nil; Nova Scotia, \$1,572,000; New Brunswick, \$1,532,000; Quebec, \$10,091,000; Ontario, \$19,750,000; Manitoba, \$3,259,000; British Columbia, \$9,682,000, and Northwest Territories, \$7,547,000. The amount paid in subsidies in the three maritime provinces is less than in the other provinces. The Intercolonial railway, however, cost about \$70,000, a large portion of the expenditure for this government road having been in the maritime provinces. The Prince Edward Island railway—a government road—cost over \$5,000,000. Naturally the government would not bonus roads to compete with the government system.

What is particularly interesting in regard to these statistics, is the proportion of money voted by the government for roads in the west, compared with the expenditure in the older provinces. The total sum paid as subsidies to aid railway construction between Lake Superior and the Rockies was \$12,460,000. Some eastern journals still keep up the cry about the great expenditure the east has assumed in order to develop the west. The actual figures, however, tell a different story. The vast area of 56,087,072 acres of land has been granted to railways in Manitoba and the Territories, of which about 30,000,000 acres have been selected or earned. The value of these lands is greater than the cost

John Oliver, M. L. A., was unquestionably right when he declared in the House last Monday that "the C. P. R. and the Government had conspired together to despoil the province."

The fact that Colonel Prior is a shareholder in the Crow's Nest Pass Coal company may explain the premier's reluctance to do anything that would break the fuel monopoly in the Kootenays.

Prior admits "as a layman" that the East Kootenay prospectors should get what they ask for. He will have to admit it as premier very soon or not at all, for his days as premier are numbered.

It is undoubtedly the duty of the Opposition to prevent delays in the investigation that is to be made into the East Kootenay scandal. If Wells and his outfit are allowed to have their way the legislature will have adjourned before a report is ready.

Why does Premier Prior maintain such a studied silence about the East Kootenay scandal? Either the prospectors who have been refused licenses are justly entitled to them or they are not. Why doesn't the premier get off the fence and declare himself on this all important question?

Referring to the East Kootenay coal and petroleum scandal the Fort Steele Prospector says: It now rests for them (the Provincial government) to grant licenses to all who have prospected and staked claims in these fields and who have made application for them.

A great many people in the States and in Paris seem to be intensely interested in rumors that W. K. Vanderbilt is to be married to a widow. 'Tis a great white light that beats upon an American millionaire, especially if he be divorced.

The success of the metalliferous mines of the Kootenays is now dependent upon the grasping policy of the Crow's Nest fuel monopoly. There would be no monopoly if the Prior government would do its duty and issue licenses for the development of the coal lands in the southeast corner of the province.

Under existing conditions the cost of smelter fuel in the Kootenays is unnecessarily high. Prices might be reduced from 25 per cent to 50 per cent and the Crow's Nest Coal company would still make handsome profits. The only way to bring about a reduction of cost is to encourage the development of other coal fields.

No truer word was ever spoken in the legislative halls of British Columbia than when Smith Curtis remarked in the House last Friday that "the government could not get away from the colliery interests." It matters not whether it is the Dunsmuir or Vancouver Island or the Crow's Nest monopoly in East Kootenay, the Prior government is a willing slave to the coal barons.

Nelson is scarcely a subject for congratulation upon receiving an appropriation of only \$40,000 for a courthouse. Nelson should receive as much consideration as Rossland in this matter. Rossland's courthouse cost about \$50,000 unfinished. The furniture is of the best and cost considerable money. This niggardliness is all the more astonishing when it is remembered that Nelson's representative in the provincial legislature is a Government supporter. Nelson always did get the worst of it on government appropriations, but at no time more so than since it has been represented by "a practical politician."

The power line from the will be built as some eighteen men ing had a hand in the at the Coal Creek of March 19th, have these there were served with summons secretary of Gladstone, one of the exes are among the misl Ruben is the last to under bonds.

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THE BOU

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