THE PREMIER AT NANAIMO.

Concise Review of Provincial Affairs—Government's Efforts to Open Up the Country.

Trade Relations With Australia—Railway Development—Lumber a Great Source of Wealth.

On Saturday evening a public meeting was held in the Nanaimo Opera House, which was attended by the Premier, the representatives in the local Legislature of the constituency, and a number of citizens. Mayor Haslam occupied the chair.

Hon. Mr. Davie upon coming forward said he was pleased to have an opportunity to explain a few matters in reference to the policy of his Government. When he arrived in the city he had not intended to hold a public meeting. He had simply come to attend the poultry show. On account of its being in progress until last night and the fact that to-night might practically be considered Christmas eve, he did not consider it an opportune time for political meetings. However, a number of his friends had pressed him to address the electors before returning to Victoria, and upon leaving for Cowichan this morning he had promised to return if they telephoned him to do so. Later on in the day he received a message saying that arrangements had been made for a meeting, and handbills were issued announcing it. He hoped this would not be the last meeting he would have an opportunity to address in this city. He was always ready to give up his time for the benefit of the electors. He regretted that he had not had more time for preparation, as he would have been able to have gone into details and many matters of more direct interest to this community. He did not intend to enter upon those subjects that had already had their quietus on the Mainland, such as the Parliament buildings and the Redistribution matter. These questions he had gone over thoroughly on the Mainland, and as he said before, he was satisfied they had received their quietus there. A number of ill-advised gentlemen on the Mainland had circulated a petition asking the Governor-General of Canada to veto the act providing for the construction of the Parliament buildings, and had gone so far as to agitate for separation of the Mainland from the Island. To further this project a convention was called at Kamloops for the purpose of inciting the people of the Mainland to rise in a body and declare for separation. Island constituencies were not asked to participate in this convention. He was pleased to be able to say, however, that the people of the Mainland resented the movement, and that in only a few instances were delegates appointed. The solid men of the community refused to take any part in the matter whatever, and the few who attended the convention were the disappointed ones who had tried to stir up an ill-feeling between the two sections of the Province. The advocates of the scheme had since found out the woful blunder they had made and the misguided attempts of these men in this direction had ended in a grand fiasco. There was little further to be said on these issues.

The redistribuaion bill, which could not be introduced at the last session, will be brought in next and will be as just a measure as it is in the power of the Government to make it.

Referring to the condition of the Province he said that before anything could be done the Government had to establish the credit of the country so as to enable them to borrow money on advantageous terms. A few years ago the Government wanted a small loan of $30,000 and employed a broker to negotiate it for them. After endeavoring to obtain the money required from several sources the Government were compelled to accept a loan from Sir James Douglas at 8 per cent. Interest and had to pay the broker 5 per cent. for obtaining it. A short time afterwards the Government had to raise some more money and a second loan was floated at 6 per cent. It was therefore necessary to establish our credit so as to place this Province on as good a footing as any other country.

In order to assist the development of our resources the Beaven administration passed what is known as the Clements Act, which he considered went too far, but was intended to induce settlers to come here. Then what is known as the Settlements Act was passed to promote the construction of the Island railroad. Government lands were thrown open for settlement at one dollar per acre and a monopoly had been given. While there was no doubt that very large grants had been given in the past, this had to be done to encourage the development and opening up of the country. The Island railroad cost about $3,000,000, in aid of which a subsidy of $750,000 was granted by the Dominion Government. Although the company received a large grant of land from the Government they could have purchased it at the time for one dollar per acre. The object of the Government was to redeem the country so as to induce settlement. What now might be considered huge grants had to be given by former governments in order to get railroads built and the country opened up.

Recently the Kootenay road had been built and the efforts of the Government were being directed to secure every possible means of opening up the country. The Government had succeeded in redeeming the credit of the country far beyond the most sanguine expectations of any of its members. Our three per cent. bonds stand second against all other countries in the world. These things having been accomplished, a new era now dawns upon the province with which the present Government has to deal. The past is a dead issue which it would be well to bury.

A question had arisen lately as to whether the Equimalt & Nanaimo Railway company were entitled to the precious metals contained in the lands secured by them from the Government. To his mind there was not the slightest doubt as to who was entitled to the minerals in question. The Government of the Dominion of Canada had denied a similar right to this province on a former occasion, and the province came out of the fight victorious. Having this in view, he had submitted the case to the Supreme court and had no doubt as to the result. While it might be decided that the baser metals passed with the grant, it will be found that the precious metals belong to the Crown, and will pass to the free miner whenever he desires to work.

Being now in a position to take every advantage of our opportunities, it was the duty of the present Government to develop the resources of the country and find employment for the people who desire to make their homes here. To advance this object, some time ago an act was passed for the purpose of furthering the development of the deep sea fisheries on the strength of an offer made by the Imperial Government to advance the Government of British Columbia a loan of £150,000, part of the conditions of which were that Crofter fishermen would be brought out and placed on our northern sea coast for the purpose of carrying on the fishing industry. A strong company was said to be ready to enter upon the development of the fisheries on the condition that these people should be brought out, and representations were made to the Government of this Province that other lines of trade would also be introduced in connection with the development of the fisheries. The Government readily brought in an act to enable these negotiations to be entered into, but it afterwards turned out that the Imperial Government wanted to select the fishermen and send to this country those persons who were of very little use to any country. As soon as this was discovered an order-in-council was at once passed that the proper immigrants should be selected by the Government of this Province, which proposition was refused by the Imperial authorities, and so the matter had dropped.

The development of our trade relations with the Australian colonies was a matter of the greatest importance to this Province at the present time. One of the chief products from that country, an article which could not be profitably raised in British Columbia, namely, sheep, might be imported with advantage. While he maintained that the Province should be self-supporting as far as possible, one could not deny the fact that sheep cannot be raised here profitably. On the Mainland they destroyed the pasturage to such an extent that last session the Government had to pass an Act to prevent it. At present most of our mutton is imported from Oregon, where is a great area of pasture for sheep raising. If we get a market in Australia for our products in exchange for sheep, it would be of great benefit to the Province.

The coal trade was our most important industry. At present our market was confined entirely to the Pacific coast. Nanaimo is the chief coal producing centre of the Province. Were it not for the coal mines of Nanaimo and Wellington, British Columbia would be in a very backward state indeed. The coal trade makes more than three-fourths of our export trade, for which San Francisco and the local trade are about our only markets. It might be said that none of the coal from here reaches the interior or across the mountains. Amongst the various Provincial enterprises which the Government has decided to assist is the railroad from Spence's Bridge to Nicola, which traverses a country containing vast coal fields, and will open up a coal trade on the Mainland, and which will not in any way come into competition with the Nanaimo coal. When these new fields were opened up, an extensive trade would be done with the East and employment would be furnished to many hundreds of people.

Another railway enterprise assisted by the Government was the road from Nakusp to Slocan, which was intended to prevent the trade of the upper country from being drained to the south, to the harm of the cities of our own Province. Thus it was that the Government had aided these roads by liberal grants. After the House had risen early this year the necessity for completing the Slocan road earlier than was contemplated in the act became impressed upon the Government, and it was decided to assist in rushing it through as rapidly as possible, consequently the track was completed to Slocan Lake early in December. As a matter of fact the Government had made a better arrangement in the interest of the country than the act had authorized them to do, but as this had to come before the House at the next session, it was not necessary at this time to go into the matter any further. The opening of the great mineral belts of the country through which this road passes would be of great benefit to the Province.

The lumber trade would in the near future be a great source of wealth to the Province. The prospects of trade with Australia were very bright. Although the market was now dull and prices could not be obtained to make the manufacture of lumber profitable, there must soon be a change, and with it British Columbia would become the market of all those countries across the Pacific requiring lumber. At the present time most of the lumber used in Europe and Australia is taken from the Baltic. It is of inferior quality to ours and it would only be a matter of a short time when the attention of these countries would be directed to the Province of British Columbia. In the case of Australia, the distance to the Baltic provinces is over 11,000 miles as against 6,000 to British Columbia, so that it will be only a short time when we will have to furnish this most important market with our lumber. As soon as the lumber industry began to properly develop it would furnish employment to a large additional population. Complaint had been made that there was not an official log scaler, and that under existing arrangements loggers could not get fair treatment from the mill owners. Hence the Government had passed an act to appoint an official scaler, but afterwards, upon making further inquiries, it was found that it could not be put into practical operation. An act of this kind could not be worked unless both parties were bound by it and obliged to accept the measurements of the official scaler. A new act would be introduced at the next session providing for compulsory scaling and the appointment of the necessary officials to carry it out. Some time ago the Government had brought in an act providing for a proper survey of the Province. Under this authority the ministry were causing surveys to be made as rapidly as possible. In the meantime the general sales of lands had been stopped. The large and rich tract of country known as the Nechaco Valley had since been discovered and would shortly be thrown open to settlement. A large tract of valuable agricultural land had also been discovered on the north end of Vancouver Island, which in the near future would be the scene of a thriving community.

Having placed the finances of the country in a sound condition the Government could consider the question of aid to settlers in acquiring small holdings. This could not be done before for want of money and might not be put in operation during the present fiscal year but there is no reason why the Government should not adopt a scheme whereby parties taking up land and expending a certain amount of money in improving it could get an advance from the Government at a reasonable rate of interest extended over a period of years by giving their property as security for it.

The Chilcotin country to the west of the Fraser river is now open for settlement and would furnish homes for an immense population. The Government had constructed a wagon road through this country from Soda creek to Hantsville, a distance of one hundred and twenty-five miles, which would soon be extended to the coast. When the coast extension is completed boats could ply between the coast cities and the end of this road, and in a short time a large trade would be developed. A man with only a small amount of money cannot settle in the midlands of this province with the hope of putting enough land in condition for cultivation, on which to make a living for himself and family. In some countries where similar difficulties had to be contended with the governments had seen fit to advance to bona fide settlers grants of money to open up lands on the terms he had just stated, and while it is not possible to adopt such a scheme in British Columbia just now, in the near future he hoped to see such a policy inaugurated in this Province. The object of the present Government has been to place a high tax on all such land not previously exempt and recently for instance in the neighborhood of Victoria lands that had been formerly taxed at $50 an acre were now taxed as high as $750 an acre. This was being done to force parties holding valuable tracts in an unimproved state to put them in a state of cultivation or sell to someone else who would. It has been the policy of this Government to put a high tax on all wild lands. He did not think that this tax went far enough now: the trouble is if a man owns a large quantity of land and wants to escape the wild land tax he goes to work and improves it, spends a few hundred dollars upon it in building a fence or something of that kind and then goes away to England or somewhere else and waits until the improvements on surrounding land increase its value when he sells his land out at a large profit. He thought an improvement on this tax would be to compel those who do not actually use the land, that is absentees, to pay the higher tax until they have to let the land go or use it. This is the legislation which he thought with justice might be resorted to in future. In regard to the Esquimalt & Nanaimo railway property, he wanted it understood that under their grant they were exempt from taxation on the lands granted to them. This was granted to the company by a previous Government, and the present Government must in justice recognize the obligations of their predecessors. It was agreed that the company should have that land free of taxes until they sold it, and while they might encourage them to sell it, the present Government cannot break faith with them. It has been proposed by the Opposition to tax these lands, but once the Government shows it is going to cancel existing obligations and break faith with those it has made bargains with, immediately its credit is not worth a snap. So that whatever is done, he said, his Government would still pursue, and intended to pursue, a just method of taxing land and they should never do anything which would impair existing obligations. For the reasons he had shown, he said, the company were bound to get rid of these lands when they can, and he hoped that by-and-bye when the Government found itself in a position to bring in a measure for the purpose of aiding the settlement of small holdings, as for his part he intended to aid, there will be a fair chance of their being able to make some arrangement for the better settlement of the lands between here and Victoria. Not that those lands were not being settled, because they are being settled, and he knew, he said, that the company are anxious to sell and he wanted to encourage them to procure the settlement of those lands to a greater extent than at the present time.

Continuing, Mr. Davie said he supposed they would expect him to say something about what is known as the Canada Western project, that is the project of building a railroad connecting with the E. & N. and running up to Seymour Narrows, crossing there to the Mainland and becoming part of a great transcontinental line. The Government, he said, had offered a large subsidy in land to the promoters of such a line, and a great deal has been said about the project, but it does not assume at the present time a very encouraging aspect. A syndicate has been floated, but nothing definite has been done. Whether the entire scheme will be brought into shape, a portion of it most certainly ought to be brought to a successful issue speedily, and will be if within the power of the Government to bring it about. He said he referred to that part of it north of Nanaimo to Seymour Narrows. It seemed to him that Dr. Helmcken's views on this subject were right and that it would open up the country and the road ought to be encouraged. He hoped they would before long be able to place something tangible before the House with the view of the extension of this road, and it will be a part of that scheme to open up all the land in the northern portion of the Island. That railway is bound to come in course of time, no matter what Government you have, and the aim of the Government ought to be to bring this state of affairs about and to open up the country as rapidly as possible. Although many of the matters were undertaken by the Government preceding the present one, it must be remember that the date of the coming into power of the present Government was only a year ago last July, when he was called upon to form a ministry, and although many of these matters were inaugurated by the proceeding Government, still they were inaugurated by a Government which this Government succeeded and were thoroughly in sympathy with. He said for the last ten years he had supported the Government which had been in power and which he deemed had worked in the best interests of the country, and the matters which he had brought into existence have had the consideration and were the policy of the previous Government. By the turn affairs have taken the Government which now exists has opportunities in its power which no previous Government ever had. After informing them to some extent of the policy which the present Government intended to pursue in future, he said it would be for them to say in a few months whether they wished to make a change of Government or not. That would be a matter entirely for them. If they thought the business of the country could be carried on better by other people, it would be in their own hands to say. While having no intention of relinquishing the reins of government unless the people desired it, to him personally to be in politics was a matter of loss financially, as those who have known him know that he had a lucrative practice which he has been compelled to a great extent to relinquish; he would be better off from a point of personal profit if he were relegated to private life at home. He had shown them he was not blind to the vast interests of this country and the great responsibility which rested upon him. Everything he had made in his practice he had wisely or unwisely invested in this Province and he had no desire but for the welfare of the Province, which meant also his own individual success. He had every confidence in his own and his colleagues' methods, and he hoped to be able to carry them out; whether he was or not depended on the will of the people. He had shown them that the people abroad had confidence in his Government. If they had not that confidence they would not have lent the Government their money and treated with them on as good a basis as with the most favored countries. In the great financial circles, if they had not confidence in us they would not have placed the financial position of this Province second amongst the colonial securities of the world. Those who have money invested are here most deeply interested in our progress and have confidence in this Government. The question then remains, are the electors of the same opinion or are they not? Continuing, Mr. Davie said: Now, gentlemen, I think that is all I have to say: the issue will be before you before very long. I hope to have an opportunity to address you again and to go into these subjects more thoroughly than I am at the present moment prepared to do. I thank you very sincerely for the kind and patient manner in which you have heard me, and I look forward to an early opportunity of meeting you again. (Loud applause.)

Mr. Davie then moved a vote of thanks to the chairman, which was carried unanimously. At this juncture Mr. Keith rose and said that although the meeting had been called to explain the policy of the Government, he thought the present members of the House from this district may have something to say on the subject. (Cries of platform.)

Mr. Davie wished it understood that although the meeting had been called by him, he was quite willing they should be heard, but he reserved to himself the privilege of fifteen or twenty minutes to reply when they had finished.

Mr. Keith on taking the platform stated that he was surprised at hearing that a meeting had been called for this evening as he had asked Mr. Davie yesterday if there was to be one and he told him, no. He said they had heard a great deal about the policy of the Government, and he was sure it must give them pleasure to hear some of the opinions of the Premier. He said, when he was elected to represent this city he was elected on the Independent ticket and he had remained independent as far as laid in his power, and that was the stand he took today. He would take the liberty of referring to some of the things the Hon. Premier had spoken of. In regard to the redistribution bill the question we were told had been fought out on the Mainland and it was practically dead. They were also told that the reason the Government had not brought in a bill as promised at the last session was because they had not the proper information, while it was conclusively proved in the House that they had the proper information and that they had all the information in then that they have at the present time—he thought the Hon. Premier would bear him out in this. He thought the question of redistribution was one on which the Government would probably bring in a bill at the next session and try to rush it through. That, he believed, would be the policy of the Government at the next session. The next question he referred to was about the former government having borrowed $30,000 which showed how hard it was to get money at that time; it was very hard fifteen or twenty years ago, much more so than the present. He said we expected to develop something within the next fifteen or twenty years and he thought we were growing very fairly. It is proved that we can borrow money at three and four per cent., and that shows the country is growing and will continue to grow. But there was another thing he would like to refer to, and that was the grant to the E. & N R. Co. Mr. Davie had said the terms got were not so advantageous as the former Government had offered. He knew that; but if one Government does wrong that is no reason why another should perpetuate that wrong. Since the grant was given that company it was found that time and time again grants have been given on precisely the same terms, yet the Premier said it would not be done again, a statement which the speaker wished he could believe. The Canada Western railway received some 20,000,000 acres on precisely similar terms. He said he found the policy of Mr. Davie's Government was the policy of giving away and encouraging monopoly. He considered that the very question of giving away 20,000,000 acres of land, exempt from taxation, was a sufficient answer to any proposition the present Government could bring up that they would not give land at the present time. He says that the Government's aim ought to be to develop the resources of the country, but has the aim of his Government been to develop the resources of the country? He did not think they had devoted themselves to the development of this country at all. He did not find that they gave any special facilities to the people to take up land. We are told, he said, that the E. & N. R. R. sells land at $3 an acre, but the fact was they sold some at $10, and lands they think are valuable they don't sell at $3, but they are quite willing to sell any lands they do not think are valuable. Continuing, he spoke of the deep sea fishery, and said that the Hon. Premier tells us of the great benefit it would be to the Province. The Government propose to give $500,000 acres of the coast land, the most valuable portion of the Province, to this industry. That, he thought, may be trying to develop the resources of this Province, but he failed to see it. He said the Government was giving this land away on behalf of the Island, and on Queen Charlotte Island for the development of the Province. Well, perhaps it was, and then he told them that the reason the negotiations fell through was that the British Government wanted to to send out a class of inferior crofters and fishermen and this Government would not have them. The reason, Mr. Keith said, to his mind was now, and as he had stated in the House, that the whole scheme was impracticable, that it was nothing more nor less than a wild cat scheme for speculative purposes. He believed that the charters to twenty or more railways, that have gone through the House were only because large land grants have been given. These charters have been peddled over the country but no one would buy them; not one out of twenty during the last twenty years had been built. They thought they would get enough land to enable them to sell out and make their few million dollars. We were told, he said, that there was to be about £1,500,000 capital. Anyone knows there would not be justification for that amount of capital to be sunk in it; we have not the population here; we cannot afford to send the fish east or south. We could never have any market that would justify such an expenditure as that, therefore it was simply an impracticable and speculative scheme, nothing more and nothing less. He said that Mr. Davie went on to compliment us on our coal resources. We have all that, but in contradistinction to that we find that the present Government has merely treated Nanaimo as a suburb of Victoria since ever it was in existence. As the Board of Trade very properly brought before the Honorable Premier the other day, we have no facilities for law business in connection with our Supreme court. We asked for a land registry office and we cannot get it; we asked for other things but we have not got one of them. There was something peculiar, he said, about these things. When he went into the House as an Independent member the Government was very courteous. They went in free and unprejudiced, and found it very plain sailing for a few weeks, until the Government found they could do without them; then it was different. It was the duty of the Legislature to protect the lives of their miners, and it might be interesting to note what has been done on some few points. Last year New Westminster got a grant of $75,000, or $15,000 a year for five years, to construct a bridge. There was something rather peculiar about that. The gentleman, he presumed, who got that was Mr. Punch, who was elected an Independent, and for selling his pledges and his honor and becoming a supported of the present Government his district received a benefit to the tune of $75,000, and that this bridge was to be built through or on land closely adjoining property owned by him. They found that Vancouver had another man of the same description, who thought his honor was worth a $40,000 courthouse to support the present Government. Victoria has been for a long time the stronghold of the Opposition and the residence of the Cabinet, and they found that there are about fourteen or seventeen members residing there, and in order that Victoria may be appreciated they found they got $600,000 for the Parliament buildings. Now, that was rather peculiar. Nanaimo got only $15,000 for a jail last year. He supposed the Government came to the conclusion that the Nanaimo members were honest and could not be bribed, but we were told it had been forced upon them. Is was simply because they came to the conclusion they could not help giving that $15,000, therefore they gave it. They were further told that the financial policy of the Government had placed them in such a position now that they were able to do quite a number of things they were not able to do before. He said he could readily understand that of course the financial position is a great deal better now, because the resources of the Province are better understood and we are better known. He did not see that any credit was due to this Government but to the development of the Province. It has developed very rapidly within the last few years, but there was one peculiar thing in connection with this money the Government was able to borrow so cheaply the Premier had forgotten to tell. While they had borrowed they borrowed enough to pay off their consolidated debt, but they are running into debt now from $100,000 to $200,000 a year. We have borrowed this capital and have got to pay it some time. And yet in the face of that this Government goes to work and borrows $600,000 to build Parliament buildings at Victoria. The year before they had voted $75,000 or $80,000 to buy land to put them on and then the Premier pretended to tell them there was justification in going into debt for $700,000 for Parliament buildings. There was never anything in history to compare with this. The Dominion House in Ottawa came to nothing like the per capita tax that this does. It is outrageous; it is preposterous. The Province does not justify it. If we had money on hand, there would be nothing in voting a large sum to building Parliament buildings to be an ornament and he supposed an attraction to tourists who came to Victoria. That was one of the reasons brought up for building them, that it would be a beautiful place for tourists to visit, and we have to cater to that to the extent of nearly $700,000, and he believed before they were finished it would amount to $380,000 or $400,000 more. The Hon. Premier has told you about bonusing roads, the Nakusp and the Slocan road, but the sum of money to be spent on that might build a road. We find we have numbers of idle men staring us in the face in this Province. We have them at Wellington, Kamloops, Vancouver and New Westminster, not by the dozen but by the hundreds, and we find we have a Government going to spend that amount of money on parliament buildings that are utterly useless. He did not say this with any harsh feeling against the Government, but these were thoughts that were forced upon him. This Government was not doing its duty, they simply wanted to anchor the capital at Victoria, where some fourteen or seventeen members of the Provincial Legislature reside. And if these buildings were built inside of a year there would be just as many or more idle men than before. (A number of people left the hall at this stage of the proceedings.)

He said he was very glad to hear that it was the policy of the Government to tax wild lands, because it fully met his views. He said he could endorse the policy of taxing wild lands as the Independents and Opposition had advocated that, from time to time in the House until the Government saw it was best, and although they had not made much of a showing they had helped to spur the Government on to tax wild land, which was one good thing in itself.

He did not think it necessary to refer very much to the Canada Western. He had voted for the second reading on the condition that two amendments of his should go in. One of the amendments was that this land should not be exempt from taxation for a period longer than ten years and the other that it should be open for settlement at the current rates for government land. They did not see fit to accept these amendments and he, therefore, voted against it. His sole reason for voting as he did was that he knew there was a majority and they would pass that bill in any event and he thought if anything could be added to it he voted for it with that hope. They had heard a great deal of talk about the financial policy of the Government, and why it was we were in such a good financial position. Well, it was, as he had said before, owing to the development of the Province that it was placed in that position. Our Province, he said, had been placed so prominently before the money markets of the world that he did not think the worst Government could do any harm. We found that specimens of our minerals have been sent over the world, and if even one-tenth of the reports were true, it would be a paradise. He presumed that was the secret of our financial policy, the Province has got such a good reputation no Government could spoil it.

In conclusion, Mr. Keith said the Government had done one good thing since he went into the House and that was about that wild land-tax. They had refused to raise the tax against Chinese, refused to debar them from working underground, to prohibit monopolies in railroads, and they were giving away as rapidly as they could the rights of this Province. He did not see that they were developing the resources of the Province. We are told that these railroads are developing the Province, but when the business justifies it the railroad will be built; if there is traffic to justify a line of road to be built it will be built. He considered no government had any right to give away land. He certainly would be in favor of a guarantee because then the land would come back in the future.

Mr. T. Foster, on taking the platform, said that after the speeches the audience had heard he thought it was not advisable for him to speak at any length, but there were a few points the previous speakers had neglected to speak about. He did not know whether he should say anything about the Government buildings as they had heard so much already; yet there was the temptation to speak of them because when he remembered the arguments he had heard he desired to call their minds to some of them. For instance the Commissioner of Lands and Works said the buildings were necessary. That was a proper argument if he could substantiate it. Mr. Turner said it would be a great attraction for tourists. Then Colonel Baker said the scheme would anchor the capital there in Victoria, and finally, the President of the Council, Mr. Pooley, got up and told them it was a grand scheme to give work to the unemployed, so, remembering such things, he felt very much tempted to repeat them. He thought the Government would have been perfectly right in taking a certain plan and building a certain portion of the buildings according to that plan, say $150,000, and he thought most of the people throughout British Columbia would have said that was right and sufficient. The year before $75,000 was appropriated to build a new registry building and he believed they had a great necessity for a new land department and another $75,000, he thought, would have been sufficient for all the buildings for the next twenty-five years. While admitting it would undoubtedly give ample opportunity to workmen still, he thought, the Province could not get the same benefit out of that expenditure as if it were applied to building roads. British Columbia produced ample products, but the producers could not get their stuff out to the markets; consequently, what is necessary to enable the farmers to meet the demand is that they should have better roads to get their stuff out; so spending $600,000 in the city of Victoria does not enable the farmers to meet the demand, which they could have had that money been spent on roads. Then, in respect to the lumber business, the Hon. Premier told them that arrangements would have to be made for the payment of a government scaler. Two years ago the fishermen and a considerable number of loggers held a meeting in Victoria and discussed the same thing, and it was then decided that the Government should appoint a Government scaler, and they said they would be satisfied to take the official scale. He said he attended at committee meetings at which lumbermen and loggers appeared, and knew what he was talking about. Last winter the Commissoner of Lands and works was asked why a scaler had not been appointed, and he replied that it would not do to appoint them as the lumbermen would have a hard enough time to get along. Now, what did that mean? It meant that if a lumber scaler was appointed they would have to pay more stumpage, but the lumbermen were willing to pay for all they got. If the mill men cannot afford to pay stumpage let the Government give them a rebate. Mr. Foster then said he believed he should say something about the British Pacific. There again the Hon. Premier said he would never think of giving such charters as the Nanaimo & Equimalt railway got, but they have done it; they voted for the same thing last winter when they extended the time for the building of the British Pacific and the same iniquitous exemption of land from taxation, and he did not think it would be changed as long as the present Prime Minister is in power. He said he would tell them one thing, there is a difference between the charter to the Esquimalt & Nanaimo and to the Canada Western, and that is the Canada Western takes its land in alternate blocks, which is an improvement over the old way.

(To be continued.)

BEYOND SAVING.

San Francisco, Dec. 26.—The steamer New York is beyond saving. The seas are washing over her. From reports received to-day the vessel's nose is only out of the water, and everything below and above decks is awash. The once magnificent vessel will be battered to pieces by the wind and waves.

THE DONALD SHOOTING.

Donald, B.C., Dec. 26.—(Special)—Constable Redgrave was found at his house and arrested. Barr has been removed to the Golden hospital. He is doing well, but the bullet has not yet been extracted. Redgrave will probably have his preliminary examination on Thursday.

BARCELONA'S BOMBS.

Barcelona, Dec. 26.—In confession made to-day Cerezuelo, the Anarchist arrested in Huesca, said that he threw the bomb in the Lyceum theatre, and that Codina made the bomb from Sivepol's models.

PORT CREDIT MURDER.

Toronto, Dec. 26.—(Special)—William Wallis McWhevill, alias McGuire, a young Scotchman suspected of murdering old Williams and his wife at Port Credit, was arrested at the Woodbine, near Scarboro, early this morning by Detective Davis, and landed at police headquarters at seven o'clock.

San Antonio, Dec. 24.—Chief Deputy Walters will leave this week for San Francisco, having in charge sixty-five Chinamen sentenced to be deported for violation of the exclusion act. He will be accompanied by twenty guards. All of these Orientals have been arrested within the past three months. Twelve of them are in jail in San Antonio, nineteen at Del e Rio and the remainder at Eagle Pass and El Paso.

Indianapolis, Dec. 24.—H. Waters was murdered at 11 o'clock last night by burglars whom he surprised robbing a butcher shop at Seventh and Tennessee streets. His body was found on the common. His head had been split open with a cleaver and three bullet wounds were found in his chest.

BIRTH.

Leighton—In this city, on the 21st inst., the wife of J. Buie Leighton, of Savona, of a son.

Helmcken—In this city on December 21st, the wife of Dr. J. D. Helmcken, of a daughter.

MARRIED.

Cox—Henley—At Clover Point Hotel, by the Rev. Bishop Cridge, Mr. W. H. Cox to Miss Annie Henly, both of Victoria.

Cartwright—Akerman—At St. Mark's church, Salt Spring Island, on the 16th inst., Arthur Cartwright to Martha Ann Akerman. Both of the Island.

Wootton—Smith—In this city, on the 23rd inst., at St. Barnabas church, by the Rev. George W. Taylor, assisted by Rev. Canon Beanlands, Edward Ernest Wootton, barrister-at-law, to Frances Amelia, third daughter of the late Rev. Robert Hall Smith.

Browne-Hosking—At St. John's Church, on Wednesday, December 20th, 1893, by the Rev. Percival Jenns, Charles Robert Benjamin Browne, son of Benjamin George Browne, of New Cross, London, England, to Ada Pearce Hosking, eldest daughter of Hannah Hosking, of Cambaine, England.

Batchelor—Bradley—On Saturday, the 23rd inst., at St. John's church, by the Rev. Percival Jenns, Owen S. Batchelor, Esq., third surviving son of the Rev. T. T. Batchelor, M.A., Oxon, of Cornwall, England, to Miss J. M. Bradley, only daughter of J. A. Bradley, Esq., of Victoria, B. C.

Jones—Brady—On Dec. 27th, at Christ Church Cathedral, by the Lord Bishop of Columbia, assisted by Canon Beanlands, Oswald Meredith Jones, F.R.C.S., England, L.R.C.P., London, to Kathleen Eleanor Brady, daughter of James Brady, M.E.

DIED.

Wilson—On Christmas Eve., at his parents' residence, 29 Frederick street, Thomas Haydn, youngest son of Thomas and Mary Anne Penelope Wilson, aged 17 years and 6 months.

Kipling—On the 26th inst., Edith Rose, the beloved wife of Mr. Wm. Kipling, aged 25 years.