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THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN
TIMBER.

Timber men and consumers of timber in the United States, we gather from observations in American newspapers, are deeply interested in the virgin forests of British Columbia and their probable disposition. But the interest displayed in the East is based upon grounds entirely different from the grounds we as the owners of the timber ought to have in the matter. The timber supply of the United States is running short. A timber famine is in sight. The supply has not been exhausted, it is true, but it is approaching so near to the point of exhaustion as to materially affect some industries. It is already affecting one industry, and that industry on of unquestioned political influence, so prejudicially that an imperative demand has arisen for the abolition of the duty on pulp wood. We refer, of course, to the newspaper industry. The proprietors of the great journals of New York have recently drawn attention to the fact that their business has become unprofitable owing to the operations of the paper trust. These newspapers insist that the duty on pulp-wood or on paper shall be removed in order that they may have access to the supplies still existing in abundance in Canada. But the manufacturers of the United States have exercised their hitherto unquestioned prerogative. They have vetoed the demand of the newspaper men. It remains to be seen which influence is the more powerful in Congress. In the meantime the prerogative of the legislature to put off the evil day has been exercised. The newspaper proprietors have been told there shall be no revision of the tariff until after the presidential election.

The New York Post, whose opinions on the timber question we published the other day, assumes that the government of this province has taken measures to conserve our wealth in timber. We know such is very far from being the fact. Some authorities claim enough of our timber wealth has been alienated to meet all probable demands for a hundred years. It is an admitted fact that all immediately accessible sources of supply have passed into the hands (principally) of speculators, mostly from the United States. More than six million acres have been staked and leased. The government only stopped the game of grab after its friends had satisfied themselves.

Speaking to a representative of the Nelson News last night, Mr. C. O. Buchanan, president of the Interior Board of Trade, a practical lumberman, said: "We were unable in the meeting of the Board of Trade at Moyle to endorse in any sense the request of the lumbermen for an extension of the term of their licenses from 21 to 43 years, which we construed to mean practically life tenure. We took the ground that the government never intended to convey more timber than that required for immediate use. If men have imprudently loaded themselves up with a hundred years' cut of timber under licenses which are only good for 21 years, they have no right to expect the government to surrender entirely its reversionary rights in order to make good their speculations. A few years ago the licenses were annual, with no agreement for renewal. At the request of the lumbermen the term was extended first to five years, then to sixteen and then to twenty-one, the legislature always taking the ground that they were dealing out of their hands only so much timber as was required for immediate purposes, retaining the balance for a better price later on."

"As to the value of timber in the near future," continued Mr. Buchanan, "it is apparent that in a few years British Columbia will have almost a monopoly and will get her own price. Stumpage in Ontario, Wisconsin and Minnesota is now bringing from \$10 to \$12 a thousand feet, and in less than 20 years it will be worth that here."

On Mr. Buchanan being asked as to whether there were not timber men loaded up with timber holdings, he replied: "Unfortunately there are a few, but I believe the bulk of the 10,000 licenses that have been taken out in the last few years are already in the hands of non-residents, mostly aliens. These men bought from the locators at nominal prices and in full view of the limitations of the license. Any beneficial change now granted would accrue chiefly to the benefit of foreign speculators and enable them in years to come to more effectively claim the resident British Columbia mill owner."

"How much timber has the government let out," Mr. Buchanan was asked. "Under these new licenses about 6,500,000 acres, said to contain somewhere about 100,000,000,000 feet. The sales reported last year were just short of half a billion feet, and even of this it must be remembered that half

the mills in the province were working on Dominion leases or old provincial leases or on crown granted lands. "Has the province still a large amount of timber ungranted?" "If they have," replied Mr. Buchanan, "it is because no one of the thousands of men who were cruising last summer knew where to find it. I mean, of course, good, accessible timber."

"Do the lumbermen agree that the government may increase the royalty?" "Yes, but they know perfectly well the royalty can never be increased to any appreciable extent because many mills are located where they have access to inferior timber only, or to such as is too costly to log. These mills cannot stand a high royalty."

"What course do you advocate?" "The government to sit tight, to make no changes in the law without full investigation, to issue no more licenses upon any terms until it is evident that a legitimate demand exists for timber for manufacture, and then provide for the sale of the right of the timber berths by public auction."

"At Ontario prices, what would the government derive upon lands carrying 25,000 to the acre, which is said to be a very ordinary stand for this province?" "Two hundred and fifty dollars per acre or \$150,000 per square mile, in addition to what they are getting now. One hundred such sections would pay the provincial debt and the sale of 25 such sections per annum would meet the present revenue requirements of this province."

Mr. Buchanan's views are of interest as showing the manner in which the available timber wealth of the province, property which should have been administered for the benefit of its owners, the public, has been dissipated by the McBride government.

THE WEATHER AND OTHER
THINGS.

The telegraph reports another severe blizzard in the East, affecting practically all parts of the country. Only a few weeks ago the same telegraph told us the winter in the frigid zone had been the mildest on record, whereas all the inhabitants and the railway companies clapped their hands. Favorable weather with light snowfall had saved transportation interests millions of dollars. But suddenly there was a change. The temperature fell and the snow descended. Now the denizens are shivering in furs and the railways are estimating their expenditures for the maintenance of way, which includes keeping their tracks clean, at millions of dollars. However, the Mark Tappley of the East maintain a marked cheerfulness of demeanor under the most depressing circumstances. They point out that inclemency of weather does not deprive the unemployed of giving the ladies an opportunity of displaying their costly furs. Then again, like certain faith healers, they say cold is only a figment of the imagination. Thermometers may inform them that the temperature is so many degrees below zero, but really they do not feel it. The atmosphere is so dry that it acts like new wine upon the vital organs, stimulating circulation and causing a genial glow to permeate the physical being. Of course the cyclic living along the Pacific Slope cannot appreciate the point of view of these people of sublime faith. He asks what about the poor unfortunates, destitute of faith and imagination, who get caught in blizzards and cannot find their way out? Some of them must have limbs amputated to avoid corruption setting in in vital parts of their bodies. Not a few have been frozen to death. Yes; we admit there are advantages to set against these things. We have no winter sports on the ice in this part of the world where the thermometer does not trouble and the curling stone is unknown. The merry circle of the sleighbell is never heard in the land, neither does the fur cap make its appearance in our streets. But there are compensations. The song of the lark in anticipation of spring and the metallic ring of the skate upon the ice. We admit there are some who profess dissatisfaction with conditions here, in whom climatic attractions are obscured by issues which have reference to so-called "class-consciousness"; but even our friend Comrade Hawthorthwaite is not so ill-satisfied as his speeches would indicate. You could never drive him off his comfortable perch as the representative of Nanaimo by pointing out that in some other portion of the globe Socialism is verging on triumph.

Our estimable contemporary the Woman's Home Companion informs us in confidence that Jack London is safe. To be frank and candid, we never had any misgivings about Jack's safety. He embarked in his little boat exclusively for advertising purposes, and having achieved his object, Mr. London took to be found in good physical condition and fine literary fettle. The author who writes interestingly of the wilds and of the nature of half-wild and half-domesticated animals will now have an interesting story to tell of his experiences in a comparatively small boat in the vastness of the Pacific. He has prepared the way for this product by means peculiar to present day novelists, who realize the intrinsic value of a good advertisement. We hope the proprietors of the Woman's Home Companion will find their venture and the adventure of their principal contributor profitable.

If the question is in order, we should like to ask Mr. Bowser why he, as the head of the Bar of the Province and the father of his own Natal Act, does not undertake to uphold the constitutionality of the measure in the courts? The Attorney-General cannot plead pressure of legislative business, because he has lately appeared in court on behalf of private clients, and that at a time when his presence appeared to be necessary. Robert Cassidy, K. C., is an able man, we admit, but he is not Mr. Bowser, and the point involved is most important.

Kamloops, Feb. 19.—After carefully investigating the local conditions, marketing possibilities, and the experience of other localities where similar conditions obtain, a number of local gentlemen have decided to establish a cannery for fruit and vegetables at Kamloops. A canvass was made of the district before arriving at this decision and the support received more than justified the promoters in the belief that the success of the enterprise is assured from the very beginning. In order to carry the project into effect a company has been organized under the title of the Thompson Valley Canning Company, limited, with a capital of \$100,000, divided into 2,000 shares of \$5 each.

The provisional directors of the company are: Frank Rushton, chairman; A. E. McLeigh, Dr. M. S. Wade, C. H. Strutt, treasurer; and W. T. Slavin, secretary. A large block of shares has already been subscribed for, and it is expected that the whole issue will be taken up within a few days.

As soon as the site is fixed upon the work of putting up the necessary buildings and installing the machinery will be proceeded with, as it is the intention of the company to have everything ready to handle this year's crop. This year it is expected that the cannery will be proceeded with, as it is the intention of the company to have everything ready to handle this year's crop. This year it is expected that the cannery will be proceeded with, as it is the intention of the company to have everything ready to handle this year's crop.

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FLAMES WIPED OUT—
OLD TRAIL HOUSE

Historic Land Mark Built by
Col. E. S. Topping Has
Been Destroyed.

Trail, Feb. 19.—A few evenings ago fire was discovered in the old trail house on the Bowery. The fire spread rapidly and in a very few minutes this historic land mark, which was the first hostelry in the city, was enveloped in flames.

The fire brigade was promptly on hand and soon had a stream of water playing on the burning building with and a line of hose laid from the hydrant on Victoria street. The heat was intense from the now furiously burning log and the old Kaiser house, some 50 feet distant across the narrow street, was threatened, and the firemen devoted their energies towards saving this building. In the meantime the roof of the old Kaiser house, some 50 feet distant across the narrow street, was threatened, and the firemen devoted their energies towards saving this building.

With two streams now playing on the flames the brigade began to get the upper hand and gradually the fire was got under control. An old store building across the street was several times on fire but beyond a bad scorching on the end no damage was done. The fact that the night was perfectly calm and from 10 to 12 inches of snow covered the roofs of the adjoining buildings, was a big factor in assisting the firemen in preventing the spread of the fire.

The trail house was built by Col. E. S. Topping in the pioneer days of the city. The original building was of log and as the city grew and prospered the large frame annex was built. The building was unoccupied since 1902. The origin of the fire points to a straight case of incendiarism.

Mrs. W. A. McKewen, who has been spending the winter at the home of Alderman and Mrs. McKewen, will leave tomorrow evening for her home in White Horse. She will proceed by the Princess Beatrice to Skagway.

DISCUSSED THE
COAL MINE LAWS

LEGISLATURE VOTED
AGAINST INVESTIGATION

Socialist Leader and Premier
Could Not Agree as to Existing Conditions.

(From Tuesday's Daily.)

The resolution proposed by the member for Nanaimo, J. H. Hawthorthwaite, asking for full investigation into the conduct of the coal mines on the Island, with the object in view of ascertaining whether the laws respecting the employment of Orientals were being carried out, was voted down by the government yesterday. The Socialist leader contended that he could show that the laws were violated, but the premier said that he was not prepared to sanction the investigation. A good deal of time during the afternoon was taken up in the discussion of this question.

John Oliver moved a resolution in favor of the government remitting the personal property tax to municipalities. This was ruled out of order, but Hon. E. G. Tatlow promised that next session a reduction in taxation would be made.

Mr. Oliver also moved in favor of government supplied text books. This likewise was ruled out of order. Hon. Dr. Young gave the information that at present the government could not produce the school books as cheap as the eastern publishers.

The university was again up for discussion in committee.

Press Gallery, Feb. 17.
The House met at 2.30 o'clock.

Return Presented.
The attorney-general presented a return of copies of correspondence and documents, showing the contentions and claims of the province against the Dominion, in view of the provisions of the I. O. O. F. cemetery Thursday afternoon.

John Montgomery, a well known resident of Langley, died on Saturday. He was 59 years of age.

William Lindsay, a native of Scotland, died at one of the city hospitals on Monday. He was 53 years of age.

FOR LIGHTING OF
SOUTHEAST KOOTENAY

Large Power and Hydraulic
Plant Under Construction
at Bull River.

Cranbrook, Feb. 18.—At Bull River an enormous power and hydraulic plant is under construction. The power plant when installed will have a capacity of not less than 8,000 horse power, and will be used for generating electricity, for power and lighting purposes, to be transmitted to every city, town and camp in southeast Kootenay. The hydraulic plant will be the largest in the district. Bull River will be diverted, so as to enable the company to wash the bed of the river, also the channels. The ground has been prospected, and surveyed for a hydraulic plant, and gold in paying quantities is known to exist over a large area.

Last night the health and morals committee met and considered the case of the bawdy house on Herald street and other matters which had been referred to them by the council. They will be ready to report to the council at the regular meeting on Monday night.

Whereas it is also well known that a horde of illiterate Orientals are employed underground in the mines at Cumberland;

Therefore, be it resolved, that the government take prompt measures to inquire into the foregoing matters and enforce the laws in question.

He contended that incorrect statements had been made as to the conditions obtaining in the infant collieries. While not charging that the government had wilfully deceived the House, he argued that the government had itself been deceived in regard to the matter. In support of this contention he cited the information given to the House in reply to questions that a certain number of Orientals were employed at \$1.50 to \$1.90 per day, and recalled the previous statement that Orientals were receiving the wages of white men, which was apparently not the case from these figures. In the Wellington colliery, according to his advice, there were 1,750 Orientals employed as miners. Owing to the attitude of the mine owners the miners were prohibited from uniting in their own protection, and he claimed that it was necessary that something should be done, as serious accidents might be occasioned any day owing to the employment of these incompetent men.

Hon. Mr. McBride said if he had been deceived the inspectors were responsible, and personally he had full confidence in the inspectors, but he said that which had been previously made, having relation to this subject, had been investigated and found to be groundless. According to the information there were 495 Chinese employed in the Union colliery, and not 1,750, as stated by the member for Nanaimo. Of this number 24 were paid by miners and 471 by the company. The inspectors, he said, were instructed to spare no effort to see that the laws were enforced, and the appointment of three additional inspectors to further assist the administration of the department, over the growing area of mining operations, was contemplated for the immediate future.

Mr. Hawthorthwaite asked if the premier would contend that these Orientals were paid \$3 to \$5 a day, the wage obtaining with respect to white miners?

Hon. Mr. McBride said he was advised that their earnings were governed by the same principles as applied in the cases of miners generally.

He repudiated the idea that no miner employed in or about a shop, store or warehouse for a longer period than 66 2/3 hours, including meal times, in any one week? Are said persons employed during any Saturday for more than 12 hours, including meal times? Are said persons employed during any other day for more than 11 hours, including meal times? Are suitable seats provided for the use of every female employee, and are all female employees permitted to use the same? Are notices of the hours of employment, as provided by the Act, exhibited in conspicuous places in the shop, store or warehouse? Are the provisions of section 26 of the Act complied with and enforced, and are all sanitary provisions made? Are all bakeshops constructed and kept in a sanitary manner? Are there any sleeping places in the bakeshops? Are employees in bakeshops required to work on Sunday? Are employees in bakeshops employed more than 12 hours on any one day, or more than 60 hours in any one week? Are the provisions of section 8 of the "Shops Regulation Act, 1900," and "Amendment Act, 1901," providing against disease, enforced in bakeshops? Are any employees in bakeshops under the age of 15 years employed between the hours of 9 o'clock at night and 5 o'clock in the morning? Are any persons under the age of 15 years employed in any bakeshop? Are there any bakeshops in a cellar or underground, and contrary to section 11 of the said amended act? Are the provisions of the act kept posted in all bakeshops? Has the superintendent of Police, whose duty it is to enforce the provisions of the act, made a report as to the enforcement of the provisions of the act? If not, will a report be asked from him? The Hon. Mr. Bowser replied as follows: "The superintendent of provincial police is absent from the province; when he returns information will be obtained from him regarding the enforcement of the 'Shops Regulation Act, 1900.'"

Mr. Torston asked the chief commissioner of lands and works the following question: Is it the intention of the government to place a sum on the estimates for the erection of a new school building at Queen's?

Hon. Mr. Fulton replied as follows: "No requisition has as yet been received in this connection from the education department."

Increased Indemnity.
The bill to amend the Constitution Act and the accompanying bills providing for the creation of a new portfolio and the increase of the sessional indemnity from \$800 to \$1,200 were adopted on report and read a third time.

University Bill.
The university bill was committed. Mr. Ellison in the chair.

Mr. Macdonald objected to section 31 with respect to the terms of admission of graduates of theological colleges, practically reiterating the objections he took thereto on Friday.

Hon. Dr. Young maintained the stand which he had taken against the suggestion that the section should be struck out.

Other unimportant amendments were talked over at some length. The committee reported progress.

Second Reading.
On motion of Hon. Dr. Young the bill regarding the approval of cemetery sites was read a second time, also the bill to amend the Hospital Act, 1900.

The purpose of the latter bill, he explained, was to enable the smaller hospitals to get the advantage of the per capita grant.

The bill to further amend the Railway Assessment Act passed second reading.

Railway Bills.
On the motion for the third reading

Personal Property Tax.
Mr. Oliver moved the following resolution: That whereas the revenue available to municipalities generally is inadequate for the requirements of the municipalities; Therefore be it resolved, that in the opinion of this House it is desirable to increase the revenue-producing power of the municipalities by allowing to the municipalities the tax upon personal property now collected by the government.

Hon. Mr. McBride objected that the resolution was out of order on the ground that matters dealing with the revenue must originate with the government.

The resolution was ruled out.

Hon. Mr. Tatlow by way of explanation said that the government contemplated a rebate of some of the taxes next session and among them the personal property tax, which would naturally have to do with the matter referred to by the member for Delta.

Free Text Books.
John Oliver moved that in the opinion of this House it is desirable to provide text books for use in the public schools of British Columbia at the cost of the province.

This matter was ruled out of order on the same grounds taken with respect to the previous resolution.

Hon. Dr. Young interjected, by way of explanation, that the text book question has been considered by the government and that information was still sought in reference thereto. A proposition was being talked of, he said, whereby the various provincial governments would unite on certain text books, and by placing their orders jointly, secure the same at a reduced cost. Under present conditions the government could save even going down to a cost basis, and utilizing its own printing plant, compete with the publishing houses of the east. In Manitoba, where free government text books were available, the people had not seen sufficient inducement in the system to patronize it, as a general thing. At present, he said, the government was co-operating with the school board of Vancouver and he hoped next session to bring down some measure whereby the question would be solved.

Questions Answered.
Are the provisions of the "Shops Regulation Act, 1900," particularly in regard to the following matters: Are young persons (any boy or girl under the age of sixteen years) employed in or about a shop, store or warehouse for a longer period than 66 2/3 hours, including meal times, in any one week? Are said persons employed during any Saturday for more than 12 hours, including meal times? Are said persons employed during any other day for more than 11 hours, including meal times? Are suitable seats provided for the use of every female employee, and are all female employees permitted to use the same? Are notices of the hours of employment, as provided by the Act, exhibited in conspicuous places in the shop, store or warehouse? Are the provisions of section 26 of the Act complied with and enforced, and are all sanitary provisions made? Are all bakeshops constructed and kept in a sanitary manner? Are there any sleeping places in the bakeshops? Are employees in bakeshops required to work on Sunday? Are employees in bakeshops employed more than 12 hours on any one day, or more than 60 hours in any one week? Are the provisions of section 8 of the "Shops Regulation Act, 1900," and "Amendment Act, 1901," providing against disease, enforced in bakeshops? Are any employees in bakeshops under the age of 15 years employed between the hours of 9 o'clock at night and 5 o'clock in the morning? Are any persons under the age of 15 years employed in any bakeshop? Are there any bakeshops in a cellar or underground, and contrary to section 11 of the said amended act? Are the provisions of the act kept posted in all bakeshops? Has the superintendent of Police, whose duty it is to enforce the provisions of the act, made a report as to the enforcement of the provisions of the act? If not, will a report be asked from him? The Hon. Mr. Bowser replied as follows: "The superintendent of provincial police is absent from the province; when he returns information will be obtained from him regarding the enforcement of the 'Shops Regulation Act, 1900.'"

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Free Text Books.
John Oliver moved that in the opinion of this House it is desirable to provide text books for use in the public schools of British Columbia at the cost of the province.

This matter was ruled out of order on the same grounds taken with respect to the previous resolution.

Hon. Dr. Young interjected, by way of explanation, that the text book question has been considered by the government and that information was still sought in reference thereto. A proposition was being talked of, he said, whereby the various provincial governments would unite on certain text books, and by placing their orders jointly, secure the same at a reduced cost. Under present conditions the government could save even going down to a cost basis, and utilizing its own printing plant, compete with the publishing houses of the east. In Manitoba, where free government text books were available, the people had not seen sufficient inducement in the system to patronize it, as a general thing. At present, he said, the government was co-operating with the school board of Vancouver and he hoped next session to bring down some measure whereby the question would be solved.

Questions Answered.
Are the provisions of the "Shops Regulation Act, 1900," particularly in regard to the following matters: Are young persons (any boy or girl under the age of sixteen years) employed in or about a shop, store or warehouse for a longer period than 66 2