PRESENT CONDITIONS.

It is generally admitted that in the abstract British Columbia is sound financially; that our potential wealth is unsurpassed and that some of us may live to see this in every respect the leading province of the Dominion. Nevertheless we are to-day confronted with the concrete proposition that per head of population our debt is very heavy, that there is an overdraft at the bank of nearly two millions of dollars and that it takes a very large slice of our revenue to meet the interest upon the same. It is quite true also that our assets are enormous, that our lands will be of great value, but the government is not able to realize upon these, apparently. They are upon the market and they are not being taken up. For some mysterious, incomprehensible reason, the unfolding of which we wait with some curiosity, it has been deemed advisable to tie up for an indefinite period every scheme which promised to produce activity. At the same time, instead of a wise economy being exercised, the expenditures have been increased with a prodigality which is utterly inexcusable, when the circumstances of the case are considered. It is proposed to add a large amount to the fixed charges upon the provincial exchequer on account of a legislature which a competent critic from the outside would declare might easily be reduced by half without inflicting any injury upon the interests our members are elected to represent. It seems reasonable to assume that if the province hopes to make any impression upon the Dominion government in its demand for better terms it should be able to point to a bona fide effort to place the affairs of British Columbia on as economical a scale as possible. It may be contended, of course, that the government has proved its anxiety to atone for its past errors by giving most generous assistance to the Canadian Northern on condition that it make its terminus at Victoria. Unfortunately, the majority of the electors of Victoria were convinced that that railway scheme was a mere election dodge. Others have imputed even more sordid motives to the government. The suspicions of the first class have been confirmed by what has followed the election of Colonel Prior. Apparently no progress has been made in the negotiations and the contract the colonel saw signed is as far from being completed as ever. As far as Victorians are concerned, sectionalism had nothing to do with the condemnation of the scheme as put forward by the government. It was reasoned by electors who do not completely lose their heads at the mere mention of a railway that a government which is in earnest would not put forward such an important undertaking in such shape and at such a time. We were all anxious that the road should be built and that Victoria should be its terminus. It will open up a most valuable section of the province, a section which competent authorities pronounce to be more opulent than the portion the C. P. R. has opened to trade and commerce. When a government is installed in power which possesses the confidence of the electorate and can approach the Dominion authorities with a mandate to speak in their name, we are confident it will be possible to complete the Canadian Northern to its proper terminus, Victoria, on reasonable terms and that all the works which are necessary to assure us the required revenue and have been tied up by the present government for the mysterious reasons aforesaid will be put in operation and completed in due time. Our resources to become of value must be made available; they must not be tied up and preserves created for particular corporations. The cry of the patriots who warn us to beware of the inroads, encroachments and schemes of foreigners should be seb aside as the selfish appeals of selfish men, whose purpose is to maintain for themselves a monopoly to the last possible moment. The activity in the Crow's Nest coal mines shows the importance to the province of the works which have been strenuously, if not viciously opposed. That industry would not have been of a fraction of its present magnitude if the obstructionists had been permitted to have their way. The smelting industries of the province were to be paralyzed by Mr. Hill. But they have not been. They are flourishing. Instead of carrying the ores of British Columbia to the south to be smelted Mr. Hill is taking fuel out and bringing ores in. He is proceeding in his operations along sensible business lines, as every man of common-sense knew he would do, and he is not only making money for his railway, but is bringing prosperity into the section of the province which has the good fortune to be served by that railway.

RAILWAYS AND PORTFOLIOS.

The present period of apparent paralysis in the government ranks may be ascribed to several causes, according to the political proclivities of the speculator. The Martinite may say "Jo," the oppositionist "incapacity and general impotency" and the out and out government supporter a "period of quiescence which will surely culminate in another great railway policy." There is yet a seat in the cabinet to be filled, it will be observed, and a special railway policy is being "sat upon" or incubated for the purpose of making that seat secure. The Martin wing may have conceived the notion that having assisted to elect the Colonel, it is entitled to its reward in a policy of reciprocity. The leader is content to continue in the role of master of the administration or to play the part of "the whole thing" for an indefinite period, taking as his reward, perhaps, the consciousness of duty well done. But he is not "the whole thing" as far as his party is concerned. No, indeed. There are others. There is Willie of the Horned Hands, the guardian angel of the Workingman; and there is also the stalwart Gilmour, another "Demosthenestic" special pleader with heart bowed down because of the woes of labor. Who could stand against either of these champions in his own constituency? Perhaps the member for North Nanaimo may see a chance to attain the distinction of a seat in a government, an honour for which he has long pined and has "sacrificed" much. No one will deny that Vancouver should have a representative in the cabinet. Vancouver Island is an important section of the province, and its timber is the finest in the world, but it does not claim possession of all the cabinet material. Now it is possible that both McInnes and Gilmour are willing to serve the King in a higher capacity as well as defend the rights of the humblest of his subjects and that such strong Conservatives as Colonel Prior, the new Minister of Mines, and Mr. Price Ellison, the government whip, also a Conservative stalwart, do not want to commit themselves too utterly with men bearing the mark of the beast of Liberalism. Here we may have the secret of the apparent state of paralysis into which the government has been thrown so soon after its great and brilliant "victory" in Victoria. An innocent-looking item in the Vernon News, a paper which, it is generally understood, declares the sentiments of Mr. Price Ellison aforesaid, confirms the suspicion that the two Martinites have a rival for the vacant portfolio. The News says: "We hold it reasonable to hope that the Premier will now be able to bring additional strength to his cabinet." This declaration, taken in connection with what follows, confirms us in the opinion that the government intends to take in Mr. Ellison, unless its masters insist upon their rights and privileges. But that is not all the evidence in favor of our surmise. The Premier has gained a reputation as a worker of railway deals, which it is true have not yet resulted in any practical good save the purpose for which they were conceived—to block development or secure the election of a government supporter. The plans of Mr. Dunsmuir have never, therefore, miscarried in as far as they affected his own set purposes, and we desire to give him full credit to that extent. Here is a further indication, taken from Mr. Ellison's own organ, that he will soon be a member of the government:

"The construction of the Vernon & Midway railway is a matter of paramount importance to this section. We have reason to believe that the Dunsmuir government and the promoters have reached an understanding whereby the building of the line will be speedily brought about, but should dissolution occur, a new government be formed, or a general election precipitated, this work would receive a set-back which might mean years of delay to the project."

THE ONE THING NEEDFUL.

The Minister of Finance intimated in the House yesterday that the next provincial election in British Columbia would be fought on the question of better terms from the Dominion. That is a more reasonable proposition than following the Premier to the foot of the Throne with his supposed grievances, as Mr. Gilmour trumpeted his intention of doing. The present government seems to have constituted itself the champion of provincial rights. It is not hard to divine who is at the bottom of that programme. It was not developed by any member of the government, nor by the government collectively. It is the work of a man who fancies he has a grievance on account of unrecognised claims to preferment, and who pulls the strings to which the statesmen of British Columbia respond. This man finds himself in a most delectable position, and we have no doubt he derives the keenest enjoyment as he watches his emissaries doing his work, as well as that of the corporation in which they are all interested.

The plan of campaign contemplates the arrest of all works of development for the longest possible period, the choking up to the limit of all new sources of provincial revenue in order to make the agitation as effective as possible. But the attack will lose much of its force from the fact that there is no party in British Columbia opposed to better terms; also because the Dominion has carried out the terms of union contract to the letter, and is not open to attack on that point; because the only way in which a readjustment can be secured, if a readjustment be thought necessary, is by approaching the Dominion government in a proper spirit and not by attempting to carry a provincial election through the agency of an attack upon it; and also because an administration before going to Ottawa and demanding a revision of the terms of union should be able to point out that it has done its utmost to augment the revenue and curtail the expenditure of the petitioning province. The present government has closed tight the gates through which progress is possible, and we are told it proposes to place itself out of court entirely by conducting a campaign against the federal government. Its career has been characterised by stupidity from the beginning, and no doubt it will come to its end, probably unexpectedly, through some act of asininity.

In the case of Prince Edward Island there was at least a semblance of a reasonable claim for better terms because the confederation contract had not been carried out to the letter. The steamboat communication provided for had not been furnished. More than that, the men who acted for this province in the confederation negotiations had the experience of the provinces which first entered the union to guide them, and they seem to have profited by that experience. They made a much better bargain, judging by the figures we find in the blue books, than their eastern brethren. For a number of years British Columbia, with practically the same population as Prince Edward Island, received a subsity of $242,689.46, while the eastern island collected $181,931.88. Nova Scotia, whose original objection to confederation was that she was dragged into it against her will, largely through the efforts of Sir Charles Tupper, even under the revised terms has not been receiving a subsidy at all in proportion to her population as compared with British Columbia. We have not the recent census figures at hand at present, but in 1901 her population was estimated at nearly 460,000, ours to-day is 177,000. Our subsidy will be increased to in the neighborhood of $270,000 annually, while Nova Scotia's will remain substantially the same, $432,000. In the matter of terms, it appears we have been treated more generously than any other province of the Dominion, on account of which we suppose it is fair to assume that the men who made our bargain knew what they were doing and profited by the experience of the provinces which entered into the original confederation compact.

From the correspondence read by the Minister of Finance yesterday, it will be noted that Nova Scotia appeared to put in a claim for sufficient funds to sustain all the provincial public services without any form of direct taxation whatever, for municipal or any other purpose. We suppose the Premier in his zeal for the welfare of this province does not propose to go that far. It would be a most grateful and soothing sensation to be able to sit down, free from care, and draw upon Ottawa for the cost of all our works. But we cannot find any community that really enjoys such a blissful experience. The states of the American union are heavily taxed for local purposes. Do they receive any federal subsidies at all in the sense that our provinces do?

British Columbia went into the union with its eyes wide open. Those who claim to speak for us now complain of the high customs duties and the amount yearly exacted in tribute by the federal government. We voted to increase the tariff from 17 per cent. to about 33 per cent. As long as the government which was responsible for that increase remained in power there was no complaint about excessive taxation. The duties have been decreased by the present administration, and yet we are told a campaign is to be conducted against it by a government one of the chief members of which was long a member of the Dominion House and never raised his voice in protest against the exactions which are now held to be so injurious to British Columbia. There is also a claim to be presented on account of excessive freight rates. The government of Alexander Mackenzie, which maintained the low tariff now considered to be in the interest of this province, and proposed to build the C. P. R. as a government road and to give all the country the benefit of the lowest possible freight rates, was voted against almost unanimously by the electors of British Columbia. They were too impatient to wait for the construction of a government road, and they voted away more than enough in money and land to complete that work and hand it over as the private property of the corporation which is now charging exorbitant rates. All these things were done by the predecessors of the present government, and yet it is proposed to make an onslaught upon Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who is the legitimate successor of Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, because of the alleged wrongs that have followed on account of the political acts of the men to whom these two gentlemen were always opposed.

A government which has adopted a policy of paralysis, which refuses to raise its hands to help the province and which proposes to contest an election on a cry of better terms, is not the one to go to Ottawa to plead the cause of British Columbia. It is the duty of the electors to place in power men who are not under the influence of corporations and whose first care would not be the preservation of certain fields for their exploitation; men who would give evidence of their desire to pursue a policy of progress which would be followed by prosperity, and who by their actions would convince the Dominion that they really had the welfare of the people of the province, not the prosperity simply of corporations, at heart. One year after the installation of such a government in power terms would be arranged and works in progress which would place beyond question the solvency of British Columbia.

WHY DOESN'T HE?

To the Editor:—If, as Mr. Dunsmuir claims, he wishes to give Vancouver cabinet representation, why does he not take in his best friend, viz., Joe Martin, into the fold by making him provincial secretary without further delay?

TAXPAYER.

Salt Spring Island, B. C., March 17.

A STEEL BRIDGE AT POINT ELLICE

COMMITTEE OF WHOLE COUNCIL SO DECIDE

Theodore Cooper, Famous Expert, Will Be Engaged to Prepare Plans For the Superstructure.

It has been decided to follow out the original idea and have a steel bridge at Point Ellice. The subject was thoroughly thrashed out by the mayor and aldermen, sitting as the streets, bridges and sewers committee last night, and their report to the council will contain this recommendation. The city engineer was instructed to engage Theodore Cooper, the noted bridge expert, to prepare plans for the superstructure, while Hon. Senator Templeman will be communicated with at once to secure the permission of the Dominion government for the building of the new structure, which will have the same dimensions as that first contemplated.

The meeting, which was adjourned from Monday night, was held in the committee room. All the council were present, with the city clerk and the city engineer.

The council resolved itself into committee for the consideration of the bridge question, the mayor presiding. His Worship briefly outlined the progress and situation of the question to date, alluding to the various proposals and their respective costs. A stone bridge would cost $210,000 and a concrete steel structure $160,000. While a stone bridge was the best it would be too costly and mean the raising of another $100,000.

Ald. Grahame said the city would have to be content with a $95,000 structure, and it could not therefore have a stone bridge.

The Mayor read the report of the committee on February 24th on the subject, which had been referred back for further information.

Ald. Williams thought that the best bridge should be built. With $30,000 from the government, $20,000 from the tramway company and $80,000 from the loan by-law, and interest, the city would have $130,000, while a concrete steel or composite structure as estimated by Mr. Mohun would cost $122,000.

Ald. Cameron pointed out that a bridge was wanted as quickly as possible, and the time and amount of money involved were fatal to the stone proposal.

Ald. McCandless said they had the money on hand for a certain kind of bridge, and they should go ahead and build it.

Ald. Yates advocated reporting on the comparative merits and costs of the various projects. The public had not sufficient information on which to base an opinion.

City Engineer Topp reported verbally that a stone bridge, according to Mr. Sorby's plan, would cost $210,000, while stripped of all embellishing features it would cost at least $190,000. A concrete steel structure would cost $160,000. The construction of this style of bridge would mean an expenditure of more money here. The steel would come to $16,000, but only ordinary labor would be required. For a stone bridge the stone would be cut at the quarries.

The Mayor then read the letter of Mr. Mohun's in which he estimated the cost of a concrete steel bridge at $120,000, $90,000 of which would be expended in the city for home material and labor.

The likelihood of the government coming along with its $30,000 assistance was discussed. Ald. McCandless said the council should not count on anything but what they had on hand. He thought the people would be satisfied with a steel bridge.

Ald. Worthington favored a stone structure, but if the majority wanted it of steel he would fall in with their views.

Ald. Grahame also favored building the bridge according to their resources. Ald. Williams wanted a conference with Messrs. Sorby, Rattenbury and Mohun.

Ald. Cameron explained the situation. Since the loan was first advocated a year and a half had elapsed. The cost of the structure must be fixed by the amount of money they had on hand. The people would not approve of another loan. If they decided on another class of bridge they would have to deal with four different institutions. First, there would be the Dominion government, which would take from two to six months; then the Provincial government for its assistance, which would also occupy indefinite time; the tramway company would have to be consulted, as their contribution of $20,000 was under certain conditions; and lastly, the people would have to be considered. He also impressed upon the committee the fact that eventually a new structure would have to be built across the harbor at the foot of Johnson street, and in view of this it would be inadvisable to build too costly a bridge at Point Ellice. In view of these features of the situation he urged a steel bridge and that Mr. Waddell be instructed to prepare plans for the superstructure, and the city engineer the sub-structure.

Ald. Williams held it would be worth while to wait six months if by doing so $90,000 could be expended in this city.

In regard to outside labor, Ald. Cameron pointed out that according to a newly inserted clause in the act municipal contracts must provide that the going rate of wage be paid. Therefore, if a western price must be paid it was unlikely that eastern laborers would be imported here.

Ald. Barnard moved that a steel bridge be constructed and that an expert be engaged to prepare plans for the superstructure. Ald. Vincent seconded and suggested Theodore Cooper, as they should have the very best.

Ald. Yates moved in amendment that the committee carry out the instructions of the council and report on the comparative merits of the various proposals. The alderman withdrew his amendment and seconded one by Ald. Williams, that the council postpone consideration of the question until to-night, when a conference be held with Messrs. Sorby, Mohun and Rattenbury and the managers of the various iron works. These gentlemen certainly should be able to suggest a way to build the bridge.

Ald. Vincent—Yes, but can they suggest a way to raise the money?"

The amendment was lost on the following division:

Yeas—Alds. Worthington, McCandless, Yates and Williams.

Nays—Alds. Vincent, Barnard, Cameron, Grahame and Kinsman.

Ald. Yates then moved his original amendment, which was lost.

Ald. Barnard's motion for a steel bridge was then carried, as follows:

Yeas—Alds. Vincent, McCandless, Barnard, Grahame, Cameron, Kinsman.

Nays—Alds. Williams, Yates and Worthington.

The city engineer, in reply to a question, said there were two foundations, concrete and cylinder. He advocated the former, which would be constructed the same as the retaining wall now being built across the bay. He advised, however, that no definite action be taken regarding the sub-structure until tenders for the superstructure were received.

On the suggestion of the Mayor, Ald. Grahame moved that the sub-structure be built by the city, and that the city engineer arrange the details. Carried.

Ald. Vincent moved that Theodore Cooper be engaged to prepare plans for the superstructure, under instructions from Mr. Topp. Ald. Williams moved in amendment that Mr. Jennings, city engineer of Toronto, be engaged.

This was lost, as it was pointed out that while Mr. Jennings may be a good all-round engineer, he may not be a bridge expert.

Ald. Vincent's motion was carried. A communication from Mr. Cooper was read, in which he offered to prepare plans for $1,500. Mr. Waddell's figure was three per cent. of the cost of the superstructure, which amounted to the same price.

It was decided to instruct the city engineer to engage Mr. Cooper, while the city clerk will communicate with Hon. Mr. Templeman to obtain Dominion government permission.

After some further discussion the council adjourned until Thursday.

Most people do not know that a plant has lungs, but it has, and its lungs are in its leaves. Examined through a high-power microscope, every leaf will show thousands upon thousands of openings, infinitely small, of course, but each provided with lips, which, in many species, are continually opening and closing.

The origin of the phrase "Mind your P's and Q's" is said to have been a call of attention in the old English alehouses to the pints and quarts being scored down to the unconscious or reckless beer-bibber.

A WISCONSIN PIONEER

Recommends Pe-ru-na as Being Worth its Weight in Gold.

Hon. John Paulin, Sr., a pioneer of Port Washington, Wis., is held in high esteem by the residents of that place. He is one of the oldest citizens. In a recent letter he says:

"I have used Peruna with good results for coughs and colds. It has also cured my catarrh which always became worse when affected with but a slight cold. I am recommending Peruna because it is worth its weight in gold."—JOHN PAULIN, SR.

Mr. A. Howell, Marietta, Ga., writes: "I have been troubled with catarrh in head, throat and stomach for several years, and from accounts that I have read in several newspapers of the good effects that many had received from Peruna, and whose veracity could not be doubted, caused me to give it a trial, and I bless the day that I did make a trial. It has made a new man of me.

"I was all my life up to about five years ago a very healthy man, and about that time I was troubled with catarrh. I tried a number of prescriptions from different doctors but none seemed to relieve me until I commenced the use of Peruna, and from its use I can truly say that I have been greatly benefited.

"I am now in my eighty-seventh year and can walk and get about as well as many much younger than myself and attribute it greatly to the use of Peruna. I keep some on hand all the time, and consider it the cheapest medicine in the world."—Mr. A. Howell.

J. R. Prince, East Leon, N. Y., writes: "Peruna has saved my life, and made a strong, healthy, jolly old man of me. Peruna is just what every family should not be without. I have taken very few colds since I have used Peruna, but when I do catch cold, Peruna is my medicine.

J. R. Prince.

"A minister came to me last summer and said that he had seen my testimonial in the paper, and began taking Peruna. He said that it straightened him right up—(he was troubled with kidney trouble) and Peruna cured him. I cannot express my thanks for the benefit your medicine has been to me."—J. R. Prince.

Abraham Ziegler, Piedmont, Wayne County, Mo., writes:

"My wife who is now eighty-seven years old, suffered for about sixteen years from severe catarrh of the head, which affected her sight and hearing. I saw Pe-ru-na advertised in your almanac, and testimonials similar to her case attracted my attention. I got one bottle and it helped her so much that she is now using the second bottle and she thinks it is something wonderful. Her hearing and sight are both in part restored."—Abraham Ziegler.

In old age the mucous membranes become thickened and partly lose their function. This leads to partial loss of hearing, smell and taste, as well as digestive disturbances. Pe-ru-na corrects all this by its specific operation on all the mucous membranes of the body. One bottle will convince anyone. Once used and Pe-ru-na becomes a life-long stand-by with old and young.

If you do not derive prompt and satisfactory results from the use of Peruna, write at once to Dr. Hartman, giving a full statement of your case and he will be pleased to give you his valuable advice gratis.

Address Dr. Hartman, President The Hartman Sanitarium, Columbus, O.

Peruna can be obtained for $1.00 a bottle at all first-class drug stores in Canada. "The Ills of Life," which can be secured at all up-to-date drug stores and upon request is sent free to all, gives a short description of all catarrhal diseases. Address Dr. Hartman, Columbus, Ohio, U. S. A.

BOARD WILL ARRANGE FOR JOINT MEETING

Victoria Board of Trade Will Meet Delegates of the Associated Boards Next Friday.

A meeting of the council of the board of trade was held this morning. President, L. G. McQuade in the chair, and Ald. Grahame, T. W. Paterson, B. R. Scabrook, J. A. Mara, Lindley Crease, Ald. McCandless and Simon Leiser were present.

Aug. Van Millingen & Co., of Alexandria, Egypt, asked for information regarding the introduction of Canadian goods into Egypt.

Joseph Martin, M. P. P., wrote suggesting that the board move in the matter of securing the introduction by the Attorney-General of an act to prevent priority among execution creditors. As Mr. Eberts has already introduced the bill Mr. Martin's letter was received and filed.

The petition of letter carriers for increased pay was then considered, but the board decided not to interfere in the matter, as it had already been taken up by the Postmaster-General.

The New Westminster board wrote enclosing a resolution dealing with the excessive fees in the County court, and asking the co-operation of the board in securing a modification of these fees. The board endorsed the action of the New Westminster board.

A communication was read from a Southern smelting company asking for information regarding the possibilties for a custom smelter in the vicinity of Victoria. The secretary was directed to give all the information in his possession.

C. J. Allan, of Portland, wrote regarding inducements that might be offered to him for the establishment of a manufacturing industry. He stated that he learned that the C. P. R. considered the landing at the outer wharf dangerous.

Mr. Allan will be informed that the largest vessels land at the outer wharf with perfect safety, and he will be asked to inform the board who is his authority for such a statement. The board endorsed the movement for the establishment of the industry, and referred his communication to the city council for further action.

A. C. Flumerfelt was accorded the thanks of the board for a large photograph of the Granby Reduction Works, and the secretary was authorized to have the same framed.

It was decided to invite the delegates from the Associated Boards of Trade of Eastern British Columbia to a conference on Friday next for the purpose of discussing better relations between the coast and Kootenay, and the president and secretary were authorized to arrange for the conference. The general monthly meeting of the Victoria board will be held at the same time.

The meeting was then adjourned.

In China a traveller wishing for a passport is compelled to have the palm of his hand brushed over with fine oil-paint; he then presses his hand on thin damp paper, which retains an impression of the lines. This is used to prevent transference of the passport, as the lines of no two hands are alike.

Princess Louise (the Duchess of Argyll) is an adept at sculpture. She has recently been devoting her attention to animals, and has made some very successful pieces of sculpture from living models.

Austria announces an electrical locomotive which is to travel 125 miles an hour.

CASTORIA

For Infants and Children.

The fac-simile signature of Chas. H. Fletcher is on every wrapper.

Kidney Troubles of Children.

There are many mothers blessing Dr. Pitcher and his wonderful Backache Kidney Tablets. This remedy has proved so successful for that serious affliction of children—bed wetting—that mothers rejoice to know of a positive cure. The Tablets have a strengthening and tonic influence on the weak urinary organs of children and enable them to retain their water naturally.

Don't let your child grow up with this weakness blighting his life. Have the trouble cured in time before it does permanent injury to the health.

THE DIFFICULTY REMOVED.

Mrs. W. M. Glover, Pearl Street, Brockville, Ont., says: "One of my children that had been suffering from sluggish kidneys read about Dr. Pitcher's Backache Kidney Tablets, and procured a bottle from F. R. Curry's drug store. They removed the whole difficulty promptly. That depressing pain over the kidneys stopped, dizziness and headaches ceased, and there was a general invigorating of the system. There is no question regarding the merits of these Tablets for the back and kidneys."

Dr. Pitcher's Backache Kidney Tablets are 50c. a Box, at all druggists or by mail, THE DR. ZILA PITCHER CO., Toronto, Ont.