The Semi-Weekly Colonist.

VOL. L. NO. 326. VICTORIA, B. C., FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1910. FIFTIETH YEAR

BUDGET FIRST ON PROGRAMME

Stress of Financial Necessity Likely to Decide Asquith Government's Course of Action

LABOR DEMANDS CHANGE IN LAW

Keir Hardie Hands Bouquet to Liberals—Some Prospects of Ructions Among Irish Nationalist Representatives

LONDON, Feb. 9.—Good judges expect that the ministry will decide to rush the budget through as the immediate first fruits of the election. Mr. Lloyd George demands nothing less for his political satisfacton, while further delay would serve to provoke financial chaos involving millions of pounds in the loss of the income tax and other revenue.

The fear of leaving the King no alternative but to send for Mr. Balfour and so upset the ministerial programme against the Lords and tariff reform is quieting down the extreme Radical demands upon the King. "Trust the cabinet" is now the watchword of the Daily News.

Meanwhile Tim Healy brings a scathing indictment against Mr. Redmond for excluding the Independent Nationalists from his party summons. Healy, O'Brien and their nine Nationalists clearly mean to wreck the Nationalist party if they can.

Labor's Demand.

A labor conference at which the parliamentary committee of the Trades Union congress, the General Federation of Trades Unions and the Labor party are represented, met at Newport in Monmouthshire yesterday for the purpose of considering the recent judgment of the House of Lords, that the levying of compulsory contributions upon members of trades unions for the payment of salaries to Labor members of Parliament, is illegal. The conference passed a resolution calling upon Parliament for an alteration of the law. This is the first step to be taken in the direction of compelling the new government to so amend the law as to allow of these contributions. All the courts decided that they are illegal under present laws.

Mr. Hardie's View

Presiding at the meeting of the Labor party today at Newport, Keir Hardie, M. P., said that part of the press was engaged in speculating as to what the policy of the party would be in the new parliament. The labor leader declared that there were two sets of people who were doomed to disappointment, those who are hoping for discord in the ranks of the party, and those who expect it to enter into some understanding or agreement with the government. At all costs and hazards, declared Mr. Hardie, the party must maintain complete freedom of action in both the House of Commons and the constituencies. The treatment meted out to labor candidates by Liberals in the recent contest was not of a kind to predispose labor members toward any friendly relationship, he concluded.

Nationalist Action

DUBLIN, Feb. 9.—Resolutions were adopted at the Nationalist convention which will give new power to discipline refractory members. Heretofore a defiant Nationalist could be dealt with only by a two-thirds majority, and if he refused to resign he still could claim membership and share in the party fund. Now the party is empowered to expel a member by a majority and thus exclude him from the benefits of the fund. No anti-Redmondites recently elected to parliament will be admitted to the party without a special vote. The meeting adopted a resolution thanking friends in America for their splendid contribution to the party funds and expressing admiration for Michael J. Ryan, of Philadelphia, national president of the United Irish League of America.

Premier Asquith's Letter

LONDON, Feb. 9.—The Prime Minister tonight issued the customary letter to his followers, asking their attendance at the opening of the next parliament, "as matters of urgent importance will immediately arise."

Mr. Asquith's letter disposes of the rumor current recently that the question of the Lords' veto might be proceeded with even before the address in reply to the King's speech was moved, by explicitly stating that the address will be moved immediately the King's speech is delivered. In influential quarters it is stated that the King's speech will refer to no legislative proposals whatever except those for limiting the veto of the House of Lords, that the veto bill will be largely based on Sir Campbell-Bannerman's resolution, and that no separation will be made between the financial and legislative veto.

Fire at South River

NORTH BAY, Ont., Feb. 9.—South River was visited with a disastrous fire yesterday, Prunty's large hotel being completely destroyed. The fire started in the cellar from the furnace and spread so quickly that nothing could be saved. The loss on the hotel is estimated at $15,000, insurance $5,000.

WINNIPEG, Feb. 9.—Premier Roblin, accompanied by Mrs. Roblin, left for Hot Springs, Ark., this afternoon. His condition has improved considerably of late, and he was in fairly good shape to travel today. The premier will be away at least a month, and perhaps longer.

EARLY MORNING BLAZE

Residence of Jesse Longfield, Cook Street, Damaged by Fire of Unknown Origin.

Fire which originated in the kitchen, but the cause of which is unknown, occasioned loss to the residence of Jesse Longfield, corner of Cook street and Chatham street, at 2.30 o'clock this morning. After half an hour's fight the flames were subdued by the brigade. The roof and interior of the kitchen were badly burned and considerable damage done by smoke and water. The balance of the large house was filled with smoke but no damage was done.

The fact that his residence was on fire was first recognized by Mr. Longfield when he was awakened by the choking sensation consequent on the smoke. In his nightshirt Mr. Longfield investigated and finding the fire roaring in the ceiling of the kitchen he sent in the alarm from Box 43. The brigade was promptly on the spot and two streams played on the flames. Mrs. Longfield and a lady recently from the Old Country had barely time to dress themselves before the growing density of the smoke drove them into the garden. The loss is covered by insurance.

Toronto Fire Protection

TORONTO, Feb. 9.—Fire Chief Thompson reported today against the proposal to buy a fire tug for the harbor at a cost of $75,000. He says the high pressure is ample to protect the water front property.

Trolley Car Wrecks House

YONKERS, N.Y., Feb. 9.—Several persons were hurt today when for the seventh time at the same sharp turn, a heavy trolley car jumped the rails, and plunged down hill into the house of Albert N. Garthwaite. In four of the six previous accidents, Garthwaite has been awarded damages. His house was wrecked today, his wife badly injured, and her mother frightened into collapse. Owing to her advanced age, the latter may not recover. The other injured were passengers on the car. None were dangerously hurt.

Saskatchewan Penitentiary

KINGSTON, Ont., Feb. 9.—It is reported that Superintendent Dickinson, of the penitentiary binder twine department, will shortly leave for Prince Albert, Sask., with a number of convicts to assist in the construction of the new penitentiary there. It is also stated that Mr. Dickinson will be one of the officials of the Western prison.

FOR DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT

Opposition May Force New General Election on Navy Issue—Supplies Can Be Withheld at Year's End

TORONTO, Feb. 9.—The Telegram's Ottawa correspondent wires as follows:

"The naval issue newly created by the Dreadnought policy of the Opposition may yet bring about a dissolution of parliament and an appeal to the country by the Laurier government. There is enough debate in sight to last a month. The business of the government must be carried on in the meantime, and that means supplies. The Opposition, it is said, will refuse to vote supplies, and will thus force an appeal to the country, as was done by the Liberals in 1896.

"Not a dollar is available for civil government. If parliament were not in session the government might resort to raising money by governor-general's warrant, but that is now impossible. It is doubtful if Laurier can hold his Quebec followers and the restive Western Liberals. The situation is said to be much more critical in government circles than has been believed or been credited. Laurier's support is not nearly so solid as it looks on the surface."

NICARAGUA FIGHTING

Revolutionary Forces Apparently Suffer Severe Reverses—Reports of Government Generals

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, Feb. 9.—The prisoners taken at La Garitas have arrived at Managua. They include several officers of the revolutionist forces. The column sent from Boaso in pursuit of Chamorro reports that he is retiring in the direction of the Rio Grande.

President Madriz has received the following from Santo Tomas, dated today: "Have returned from the point where the enemy was reported. Our force marched 16 miles into the bush, finding only the tracks of the enemy. The density of the bush opposed further progress, obliging suspension of the pursuit. Heavy desertions are disorganizing the enemy. I will now attend to the pursuit of Chamorro. (Signed) Vasquez."

Jose Santo Ramirez, minister of posts and communications under former President Zelaya, who was arrested about six weeks ago, is still in jail awaiting trial. He was charged by Madriz with having used the telegraph lines of the country to further the political aims of the enemies of the government. These broad charges never were proven, and it is generally believed here that they are without foundation. Senor Ramirez is one of the most important political prisoners now in custody in Managua and local sentiment is almost universally in favor of his release.

Poas Does No Damage

SAN JUAN, P.R., Feb 9.—The eruption of the volcano Poas is of no importance. No lives have been lost, nor has property been destroyed, reports to the contrary notwithstanding.

C. P. R. SYSTEM MAY BE CHANGED

Rumors Abroad That Rearrangement of Service Will Be Effected—May Be Three Divisions Instead of Two

CHANGE MAY AFFECT GENERAL MANAGER

Alterations Supposed to Be Necessary on Account of Great Increase in Mileage of Company During Recent Years

WINNIPEG, Feb. 9.—During the past ten days there have been many rumors in Canadian Pacific circles with reference to changes in the operating department of that company. These suggest a possible re-arrangement of the work of supervision of the service in various respects.

One of the statements which have been repeatedly made is to the effect that General Manager Bury might leave this city either for Montreal or the south. It is not believed probable that Mr. Bury will leave the Canadian Pacific, but should he do so, it will be to accept the general management of one of the larger systems of the United States.

Another rumor which has found some credence was to the effect that owing to the great increase in the mileage of the Canadian Pacific, the system, which has for many years been administered in two sections, an eastern and a western, would in future be administered in three sections. The eastern and western divisions would disappear and instead there would be eastern, western and central divisions. Under this arrangement there would be three general managers and the third was to be F. F. Busteed, now general superintendent of the Pacific division. F. E. Gutelius would probably go to Vancouver as general superintendent.

Mr. Roosevelt's Plans

CHRISTIANIA, Feb. 9.—It was announced today that former president Theodore Roosevelt would arrive here on May 2, and on that day deliver his promised address before the Nobel prize commission.

New Pipe Line For Oil

WASHINGTON, Feb. 9.—The construction of a pipe line for oil or gas from the public lands of Arkansas, which was opposed in the committee on public lands, on the ground that it was in the interest of the Standard Oil Company, was reported favorably from that committee today. The passage of this measure will make it possible to complete pipe lines from the Oklahoma oil fields to the Gulf of Mexico.

Sugar Trust Pays Shortage

NEW YORK, Feb. 9.—The National Sugar Refinery Co. finally turned over to the United States treasury the sum of $604,024 due the government for shortage in importations of sugar between 1907 and 1908. Announcing the settlement, W. T. Dennison, who is assisting in the prosecution of the sugar frauds, said: "This settlement in no wise affects the criminal prosecution of any individuals who may be shown to have been responsible for any criminal frauds."

P. E. Island Legislature

CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I., Feb. 9.—On Tuesday of next week the provincial legislature will meet. There will be many important matters this session. One of the matters to come before the House will be the report of the educational board. This will be far-reaching, and suggestions will probably be made as to the necessity of the decimal system. It is understood that a repeal of the automobile act will come before the House early in the session. The standing of parties now is: Conservatives 13, Liberals 16.

Fire at Nakusp.

NAKUSP, B. C., Feb. 9.—A disastrous fire started here at 11:20 a. m. in the block of buildings next to the Leland hotel, owned by Oglivie & McKittrick, and occupied by the Canadian Bank of Commerce, Lindsley Bros.' office, W. J. Wagstaff's tinshop and J. S. Crowell, carpenter. Thanks are especially due the officers and men of the steamer Kootenay, then at dock, for their assistance. The Canadian Bank of Commerce immediately opened up business across the street in the afternoon. Loss, about $3,000, partly covered by insurance.

Dear Food Inquiry

WASHINGTON, Feb. 9.—As finally determined upon today, the investigation of the increase of prices of necessaries of life, which the senate is about to enter upon, will cover a broad field. The measure providing for such investigation was passed today with comparatively little discussion. It authorizes an inquiry by a special committee of seven senators into the general enhancement of values, not only of food and clothing, but many other articles used in everyday life. The investigation also will cover the question of salaries, earnings and the tariff. Not only will prices in the market be included, but also those of the farm and the factory. Senator Lodge is slated for the chairmanship of the selected committee.

NICOLET, Que., Feb. 9.—The Hotel Rochette was burned to the ground tonight. E. Rochette, brother of the proprietor, who was asleep in his room at the time, lost his life. An adjoining restaurant, belonging to J. Lapage, was also burned. Loss $20,000, fairly insured.

NEW SPANISH MINISTRY

MADRID, Feb. 9.—The internal Liberal dissensions today culminated in the resignation of the Spanish cabinet of which Moret Y. Prendergast was premier.

The king at once charged Jose Canalejas Y Mendes, a Democrat and leader of the extreme Liberals, to form a new ministry. This he has done, the ministry being constituted as follows:

Premier, Jose Canalejas Y Mendes; foreign minister, Garcia Priotro; minister of the interior, Senor Sagasta; minister of war, Gen. Aznar; minister of marine, Arias Miranda; minister of finance, Senor Cobian; minister of justice, Ruiz Valerino; minister of public works, Senor Calbeton; minister of public instruction, Count Romanones.

Children Narrowly Escape

HAMILTON, Ont., Feb. 9.—Twenty-five school children had a narrow escape from asphyxiation this morning at Stoney Creek. One teacher, Miss Walker, was looking after two separate classes in two rooms. The first intimation she had that there was anything wrong was when a little boy came into the room in which she was teaching and fell down unconscious. Miss Walker then made an investigation and found the scholars in the next room half unconscious in their seats. She got most of them out and then began to lose consciousness herself. At great risk she continued and finally the room was cleared. Most of the children fell down on the snow outside, but with the exception of one pupil, who is seriously ill, they all made quick recovery. A faulty furnace is given as the cause of the trouble.

STRANGE CHARGE AS TO SCHOOLS

Deputation Tells Premier Whitney of Ontario That School Buildings Are Sold Cheaply to Separate School Boards

TORONTO, Feb. 9.—That in several school districts in eastern Ontario, chiefly in Russell, Prescott, Glengary and Stormont, costly public schools had been sold to separate school boards for sums ranging from $5 to $100, and that in a number of public schools the teachers were all Catholics and that Catholic prayers and other religious observances were held during school hours, were charges made by a deputation of the joint legislation committee of the provincial grand lodges of Ontario East and West, which waited on Premier Whitney today.

Affidavits to the above effect made by gentlemen of standing and ability were laid before the Premier. The deputation claimed that these practices obtained in localities where a majority of separate school supporters had been elected on the public school board.

Sir James, in his reply, said that all the statements and documents in writing would be handed to the minister of education, and that the matter thus brought to his attention would have immediate and careful consideration.

Manitoba Nominations.

WINNIPEG, Feb. 9.—Nominations today for the local legislature were: Pilot Mound, J. B. Baird, Liberal; Stonewall, Ira Stratton, Liberal; Springfield, P. Fullerton, Conservative.

Saskatchewan Minister Married.

ST. MARY'S, Ont., Feb. 9.—The marriage of Miss Eva Mildred, daughter of J. Travis Leslie, manager of the local branch of the Bank of Montreal, to Hon. James A. Calder, LL. D., of Regina, took place at the residence of the bride's parents today, Rural Dean Taylor officiating. Mr. and Mrs. Calder left on the afternoon train for New York and other southern points.

Hudson Bay Route.

OTTAWA, Feb. 9.—In the House today Hon. G. P. Graham gave the following revised estimates of the cost of the Hudson Bay railway by the alternate routes: Churchill, construction $11,351,520; shops, etc., $7,757,152; port expenses, $6,675,000; total, $25,783,672. Nelson, construction, $8,981,000; shops, etc., $7,440,000; port expenses, $5,065,000, total, $21,486,000.

Castro in Canary Islands

WASHINGTON, Feb. 9.—The American consul at Canary Islands today cabled to the state department that ex-President Castro, of Venezuela, had arrived from Spain. Nothing was known as to his plans or future movements, but it is supposed that Castro has gotten to the nearest point of vantage to watch developments in Venezuela, with the purpose of returning to that country if conditions are favorable.

HARRISBURG, Pa., Feb. 9.—More than one billion fish were hatched and distributed from the State fish hatcheries in Pennsylvania during the last year, according to the annual report of Fish Commissioner William E. Meehan. The United States hatcheries in 1909 produced only a little more than double this total, and it exceeds any previous year in the history of Pennsylvania.

The actual total was 1,114,361,264, the production of each of the state hatcheries being as follows: Corry, 4,239,300; Erie, 224,136,345; Bellefonte, 3,577,082; Wayne, 481,880,900; Torresdale, 156,851,182; Union City, 161,750,030; Crawford, 91,865,900; Spruce Creek, 540,625.

The varieties included the following: —Whitefish, 47,867,700; yellow perch, 397,046,140; blue pike, 99,660,000; shad, 15,000,000; large mouth bass, 83,300; small mout hbass, 506,906; catfish, 459,816; sunfish, 697,280; brook trout, 9,246,375; lake trout, 2,895,000; lake herring, 114,934,400; pickerel, 300,150,000; pike-perch, 167,125.

SUNDAY CLOSING OF POSTOFFICES

Winnipeg Protest Apparently Causes Further Consideration of Recent Order on the Part of Postmaster General Lemieux

PROVINCIAL RIGHT OF INCORPORATION

Summary of Expenditure on St. Lawrence River Route, Including Montreal and Quebec Harbors

OTTAWA, Feb. 7.—Private bills, questions and motions took up the attention of the house today, and the order paper was swept pretty clear of the business of private members.

Hugh Guthrie, who has assumed the role of the apostle of technical education, secured from Hon. Mackenzie King some information as to the replies received from the provincial premiers regarding the appointment of a royal commission to investigate Canada's needs in this respect. Nova Scotia would be delighted to see such a commission appointed. New Brunswick was of the same frame of mind, while Sir Lomer Gouin's reply was more guarded. He said in his reply that his government was of the opinion that anything preliminary to public education, whether the subject be special teaching or general teaching, belongs to the province exclusively. He added that he wished no misunderstanding on the point. As, however, the minister said the commission would merely collect information, which would later on be placed at the disposal of the provinces Sir Lomer Gouin saw no objection to the appointment of a commission.

Mr. Monk's co-operative societies bill and Mr. Harris' measure respecting co-operation were read a second time and sent to the banking committee, where they will be discussed thoroughly tomorrow. The debate on the naval bill and the two amendments thereto will be taken up tomorrow, Mr. Foster having the floor.

Mr. Lewis introduced a bill to amend the immigration act, one clause of which provides that immigrants, on landing, shall each be furnished with notice, verbal and in the shape of a document in his own language, that the carrying of weapons is prohibited. A second clause prohibits immigration to Canada from Europe south of latitude 44 degrees north and east of longtitude 20 degrees east.

Post Offices on Sunday.

Mr. Haggart brought up the closing of the Winnipeg post office on Sundays. Mr. Lemieux replied that it had been closed in response to requests from various religious bodies. He had received a telegram of protest from business men in Winnipeg. The matter is under consideration.

The item of private bills caused much discussion on two measures. The first of these was the incorporation of "l'Institut de Notre Dame des Missions," an educational and charitable institution which operates in the three prairie provinces and which hitherto has been working under an old Manitoba charter. The question of provincial rights was raised, and incidentally Col. Sam Hughes took the ground that educational institutions should come under the control of the provinces. The argument was rather prolonged, Sir Wilfrid Laurier finally saying that the provinces controlled public schools, but that every British subject had the right to send his children to private schools. The bill was passed with some amendment as to property rights. The association's real estate holdings are limited to a million dollars and the provincial laws relating to mortmain will apply except where the property is within the legislative authority of the Dominion house.

Mr. Conmee's Bill Trimmed.

Mr. Conmee's bill to incorporate the International Waterways Canal and Construction Co., to which, on a previous sitting, Mr. Pugsley strongly objected, was read a second time and sent to the railway committee. The following amendments were made: Assiniboine river was safeguarded, references to it being cut out. The Saskatchewan was protected; the company was deprived of prior rights to water priveleges; the company's plans must be approved by the waterways commission and the government. The company is to have no control over navigable waters; also the bill must be reprinted and all objections must be heard.

Mr. Warburton obtained papers on the subject of the steamer routes between Prince Edward Island and the mainland. In moving he spoke of the various routes, comparing their merits.

During the question hour Mr. Monk was informed by the premier that the government was building a dredge at Sorel from plans prepared by John Kennedy, formerly chief engineer of the Montreal harbor commission. The estimated cost was $230,000. It was not the case that the dredge was found incapable of carrying its anchors without sinking even before it had any coal placed on board. The dredge, however, was being lengthened 25 feet to increase her floating powers and freeboard. Mr. Sinclair was told that the following gross amounts had been expended on the St. Lawrence ship channel by the government: Deepening, lighting and dredging to 1909, $7,205,543; plant, shop, surveys, etc., $3,501,449; improving Montreal harbor, $1,064,240; improving Quebec harbor, $1,691,026. The present government loan to the Montreal harbor commissioners was $10,870,000.

PIRATE BOLD

Story Told of Sailor's Plot to Kill Officers of Galicia and Secure Gold Consignment

NEW YORK, Feb. 9.—A piratical tale of a plot to kill the officers of the liner Galicia, seize $800,000 in gold consigned to Rio Janeiro and then wreck the vessel off the coast of South America, was told by the sailors aboard the Galicia today.

A member of the crew gave the alarm and Peter Nienam, a sailor, was put in irons and taken to Hamburg for trial. Officers of the Galicia could not be found to verify the story.

Nienam was a country boy and shipped last fall on the Galicia, which was bound for Rio Janeiro with the gold. The sailor said Nienam unfolded a plot to kill the officers with axes while they were asleep and then after wrecking the ship to divide the gold among the crew. The sailor's plan was betrayed and he was put in irons after a hard fight.

MORE FLOOD TERROR

Flood Conditions in Belgium and Part of France Threaten Much Damage

PARIS, Feb. 9.—Flood conditions in the eastern section are becoming worse. The Marne near Rheims has risen about fifteen inches today, and the inhabitants of the valley are fleeing with their belongings. The river Aisne rose three feet within a few hours.

It is estimated that the Seine at Paris will remain stationary until Monday, when it will be slightly augmented by the waters of the Marne and Upper Seine.

Among subscriptions received for the flood fund today was $1,000 from the French colony at Montreal.

LIEGE, Belgium, Feb. 9.—The river Meuse has overflowed its banks. More than 200 houses are under water at Flemelle and Jempho, while the suburbs of Liege are under water.

Grand Trunk's New Move

PROVIDENCE, R. I., Feb. 9.—A definite move by the Grand Trunk railway to secure an entrance into Rhode Island will be made tomorrow, according to Attorney John S. Murdock, of this city. Mr. Murdock announced tonight that he would file in the legislature tomorrow a petition for a charter for a company, to be known as the Southern New England Railway Co., and to be operated as a part of the Grand Trunk system. He stated that Grand Trunk officials had authorized this action.

EIGHT-STORY BLOCK PLANNED

J. A. Sayward Has Awarded G. C. Mesher & Co. Contract for Construction of $200,000 Building on Douglas Street

An eight-story reinforced concrete building, costing $200,000, is to adorn the northeast corner of View and Douglas streets. Plans have been prepared for and approved by J. A. Sayward, who is making the investment, and G. C. Mesher & Co., the contractors, who began excavation some days ago, are prepared to rush the structure to completion with all possible despatch, such being their instructions.

Unlike the general run of the blocks which have been started in the business section in the course of the past several months, this will not be designed, in part, for the rental of apartments. The lower floor will be utilized for stores only, and each one will be large, well lighted, laid out in modern style and provided with up-to-date conveniences. The other seven stories will be devoted exclusively to offices. It is impossible to state, at the time of writing, just how many of these there will be, but, as may be imagined when it is explained that the dimensions of the structure will be 80x120 feet, there will be more of such accommodation than is possessed by any of Victoria's present blocks. That this enterprise should be undertaken is generally accepted as an indication of Victoria's great development. Mr. Sayward is confident that there won't be any difficulty in finding tenants for every square foot of floor space as soon as the building is ready for occupancy.

Yesterday Mr. Mesher expressed himself as unwilling to venture an estimate of the date of the completion of the project. He declared that no time would be lost unnecessarily. This was evinced by the fact that Mr. Sayward had ordered the grading of the foundation before the plans had been definitely passed. A large force of men would be employed from the time the first stone was laid until the task was finished and the new business institution in shape for service.

October Mansions.

By the end of August it is expected that the "October Mansions," as Mr. J. H. Todd has dubbed the apartment building constructed under his instructions on his property at the corner of Cook and Fort streets, will be finished. As there appears to be some misapprehension concerning the sum involved in this enterprise it may be explained that the total outlay will reach between $35,000 and $40,000. It will be a three-story building and, as has been stated, the plans call for strictly modern apartments. "I want everything just a little better than the average" is said to have been Mr. Todd's instructions to the architect and as no reasonable expense is being spared those injunctions will be taken literally.

Just opposite to this block there is another structure in view, the capital in this instance being furnished by Mr. Todd. He is understood to propose putting up an office building costing about $10,000. Operations, however, will not commence for a couple of months.

NO RENEWAL OF PRIVATE CHARTERS

Hon. Richard McBride Makes an Important Announcement Affecting "Paper" Railways After This Session

REJECTS AMENDMENT AS TO INCOME TAX

Government Cannot See Its Way Clear to Increase the Amount Exempt Under the Act

In the provincial legislature yesterday afternoon the announcement was made by Premier McBride that after the present session, the government will adopt the policy of opposing any renewal of private railway charters, unless for exceptional good and sufficient cause. The first minister explained that many complaints had reached him of the public interests suffering in various parts of the country affected by these projected avenues of transport because their natural progress had been much impeded by these paper railroads; it was for this reason that the government would oppose renewals of charter privileges in the future.

Mr. Hayward during the afternoon asked for the discharge from the orders of his resolution in the direction of invoking Dominion legislation prohibitory of Asiatics becoming property owners in Canada. The resolution is not abandoned—but will be brought forward in another form so soon as the member for Cowichan completes the preparation of his brief.

In committee on the Assessment Act amendment bill, Finance Minister Bowser announced that after carefully considering the matter in all its bearings, he found himself unable to accept Mr. Hawthornthwaite's suggestion that the exemption of income from taxation should hereafter be $5,000 instead of $1,000 as now provided for. If the exemption was made even $1,500, instead of $1,000, the government would lose $30,000 in revenue, and although the country was prosperous the administration could not afford to too greatly reduce its revenues. He did not think the people seriously desired the increased exemption.

The bill was, therefore, reported complete with amendments.

The bills to provide for medical inspections in the public schools, and to amend the Factories Act were given third reading; the bill to bring in force the federal juvenile courts system uniformly throughout the province was advanced through the committee without change; and the second readings passed of the bills respecting crown costs and to exempt Dominion annuities from garnishee or attachment, this latter measure also being put through committee. The bill to amend the Placer Mining Act was brought down by message, introduced by the minister and given its initial reading.

Premier's Statement

It was at the opening of the house that Hon. Mr. McBride made his significant announcement in respect to railway charters. It was becoming a too general practice, he said, for certain railway companies to secure charters from the legislature, and having failed to fulfil the requirements imposed upon them, come back to the railway committee and the house year after year for renewals, although the original bill as a rule contained distinct provision for forfeiture of rights as the penalty of failure to build the projected road.

"This practice has led to an abuse," said the premier, "and let me repeat that such an abuse simply causes alarm throughout the parts of the country affected by such legislation. From information reaching my ears, after it has been said that the work must go on and the people accept it as decided that the railway must be built, nothing at all is done. This has often been referred to as building railways on paper. I wish to state that hereafter, unless for very good and sufficient cause, the government will refuse the renewal of railway charters already granted by the province of British Columbia."

Mr. Hawthornthwaite in behalf of the opposition took occasion to compliment the premier upon his stand in this important matter. From his side of the house, attention had two years ago been directed to this particular abuse, and he was pleased to see that the efforts of himself and his associates had not been without effect, and that there would be no more charter-mongering in future in regard to railways in British Columbia.

In moving for a return of all papers and information relative to changes and appointments in the assessor's office, Mr. Jardine pointed out that last session a bill had been made law for reformation of the civil service, requiring appointments by examination, etc. It appeared to him that the house was entitled to know if the principle adopted in this legislation had been followed in the appointments referred to in his resolution. The order was not opposed.

On motion of Mr. Hayward, the bill to amend the existent act of the Menzies Bay Railway Co., the first private bill of the session, passed second reading, it being explained that the measure is simply for the purpose of enabling the North Pacific Lumber Co. to build a road by which to get their logs to tidewater.

Introduced by Message

Bills were introduced by message providing for the amendment of the

(Continued on Page 2.)