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The Conditions.

Public Opinion in this colony appears to be still very erratic, unreasoning and uninformed upon some subjects of cardinal importance. The present writer was the first to take a firm stand upon the subject of the immediate construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway as an essential element in the successful extension of Confederation to the Pacific. The position was derided as Utopian and impracticable. The scheme is now, by general consent, admitted not only to be necessary but to be perfectly practicable. In fact it is now known that both in England and in Canada it is regarded as a national necessity; and the scheme, for the advocacy of which we were long the subject of jest and ridicule, appears in the list of the official conditions of union. The present writer was also the first to take the position that the construction of that portion of the railway lying West of the Rocky Mountains should be undertaken simultaneously with that on the Eastern side. That, too, was regarded as impracticable; but that, too, has been made one of the official conditions. Now, however, we find public opinion, in some quarters at least, rushing into the opposite extreme; and not only reconciling itself to the practicability of what it derided a short time ago, but demanding what is really impracticable—demanding that the work of constructing the Pacific end of the railway shall be actually commenced within one year from the admission of British Columbia. And it is a coincidence worthy of notice that this unreasonable demand emanates from the identical quarter where the whole question of the construction of the railway was ridiculed only a few months ago. It would be little better than a work of supererogation to prove the unreasonableness of this demand. Even the most superficial mind must be convinced that it is utterly unreasonable to expect much more to require as a stipulated condition, that a work of such magnitude shall be begun with such unprecedented haste. Indeed, it would appear impossible that the work of surveying and adopting the route, to say nothing of inviting tenders and giving out the contracts for the various sections, could be completed within the year. Where so much must depend on a wise selection of route, reasonable time must be allowed—nay, in such matters, hurry is not always speed. As we stated in a previous article, we are not prepared to say that three years is not too long a period at which to fix the limit; nor would we dogmatically insist upon two years being substituted. Ignorance is generally more ready than Wisdom to pronounce upon such matters.

Our experience no hesitation, however, in protesting against any attempt to get the Dominion Government to pledge itself to one year as the limit. Such an attempt could only obstruct Confederation, and thus put further away the commencement of those great works upon which so much depends. We have not the means of knowing how far a recent meeting held at New Westminster represents the views of that community; but the member for that District will, we presume, experience very little hesitation in declining to be guided by so-called instructions which could only result in placing himself and his constituents in a false and ridiculous position. New Westminster, in common with the rest of the colony, has much to gain by immediate Confederation upon fair and equitable terms; and New Westminster can no more than other parts afford to delay the inauguration of the great public works waiting upon that change, by insisting upon unreasonable and childish conditions. The Canadians are prepared to act not only justly but liberally towards this colony; but if our people take them for fools they will find themselves greatly mistaken. Those who would raise local issues now which must look for a solution from a higher than a local standpoint, and those who would seek to trammel the negotiations with foolish and unreasonable conditions, are like children to be regarded in the light of mere obstructionists. The commencement of those great works to which all look forward with so much earnest and just expectation will be most surely and effectually expedited by facilitating that political change upon which they necessarily hinge; and it will not only be true patriotism but it will be self-interest to approach the subject of Confederation in that spirit of fairness and enlarged reason and commonsense which its nature and importance so clearly demand.

Going Away.

The next steamer leaving for San Francisco will carry away from our shores a family whose departure will create a blank in this Colony, and especially in this community, not soon to be filled,—a blank in the Church, in the philanthropic associations and efforts of the Colony, in the social gatherings, on merrymaking occasions, in associations for intellectual improvement and amusement, in efforts for industrial progress, in everything good and laudable. To a Colony young, with society still so unformed, the departure of such a family is a public loss. But in the departure of the Needham family is involved a loss of yet another character. Coming here in 1865, Chief Justice Needham has discharged the important duties of his high office with an evenness of temper and a purity of purpose eminently becoming the ermine he wears with so much grace. During that period it has frequently fallen to his lot to deal with important and intricate issues, and through all he has held the scales of Justice with steady and impartial hand, displaying an amount of forensic acumen not often found in a new country. To please all would be obviously impossible; but, in seeking to deal out evenhanded Justice, without fear, favor or affection, he has been more than ordinarily successful in inspiring in the minds of the many that reverential respect for the Bench which we are apt to regard as peculiar to British communities. Some of Chief Justice Needham's judgments have commanded respect and evoked elogium far beyond the boundaries of British Columbia. During the five years of his administration it has frequently been his lot to discharge at once the most solemn and terrible duty that can devolve upon any man; and there cannot but be some gratification in the reflection that, in every instance the dread sentence pronounced by his lips found cumulative justification in subsequent confession of guilt. While the departure of Mr Needham is our loss it is his gain. The appointment to the Chief Justiceship of Trinidad must be regarded in the light of promotion; and while we do but give expression to general sentiment in regretting the departure of Mr Needham and his estimable family, we, at the same time, can offer our congratulations to them and to that community to which they will prove so valuable an acquisition.

Tuesday, March 8.

THE MURDERS AT KNIGHT'S INLET.—The Colonial Secretary, in a communication to the Musgrave Copper Company, says Governor Musgrave declines to send a gunboat to Knight's Inlet at present; but thinks it probable a gunboat will be sent up some time during the spring. The reason given for the refusal is that McGrath, who gave the information of the murders, has his own ends to serve. One year ago Governor Seymour declined to send a gunboat to the West Coast to succor the shipwrecked passengers and crew of the English bark John Bright. The reports of the wreck were laughed at and pooh-poohed then, as McGrath's report is now. Six weeks afterwards, when a gunboat was sent, it was found that the men, women and children—eighteen in all—had been savagely butchered by the Indians.

APOLOGY.—The *News* of last evening amply apologizes to the honorable member for Nanaimo for its Brutal language on Saturday. We observe, too, that the general moral tone of the paper continues to advance, and that personal attacks on honorable members have entirely ceased.

Legislative Council.

MONDAY, March 7.

COMMUNICATION.

A communication from His Excellency containing a bill for the appropriation of $340,105 75 for the Estimates of the current year.

The bill was read a first time and ordered to be read a second time on Wednesday.

PETITION.

Mr Barnard presented a petition from the inhabitants of the Mainland, asking that the telegraph be kept up by the government.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr Humphreys gave notice of motion to be considered in Committee of the Whole on Confederation, as follows: 'If at any time after union the Legislature of British Columbia should deem it to be advisable to admit foreign manufactures into Vancouver Island, or any portion thereof, duty free, and shall guarantee to pay to Canada a sum equal to the loss arising from the admission of such manufactures duty free, Canada shall on receiving a resolution to the foregoing effect make provision for the admission of such manufactures duty free. Provided always that any such manufactures when imported from Vancouver Island and entered on the Mainland for home consumption, shall be entered at such value, or as nearly as possible, as if imported directly from abroad into the Mainland.'

Mr DeCosmos—To move in Committee on Confederation the following:—British Columbia shall be entitled to levy and collect any tax or taxes on the sales of foreign produce and manufactures entered for home consumption, equal in amount to the duties of Customs now levied and collected on the same under the 'Customs Ordinance, 1867,' provided always that British Columbia shall not be entitled to levy and collect any such tax or taxes as aforesaid, if the duties of Customs of Canada extended and applied to British Columbia at the time of and after union on such foreign productions and manufactures shall be as high as the duties of customs now levied and collected on the same under the 'Customs Ordinance, 1867,' and provided always that such foreign produce and manufactures be construed to mean no more and none other than such foreign produce or manufactures as may enter into competition with the produce and manufactures of British Columbia.

Mr Drake gave notice that the Governor be requested to give a return to the House showing the cost of the Assay Offices at New Westminster and Cariboo.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

On motion the Council went into Committee of

SUPPLY.

The committee passed the Supplementary Bill as sent down by the Governor; when they rose and reported the bill as passed. The bill was read a first time and ordered to be read a second time on Wednesday.

The Council went into Committee of the Whole on the

MEDICAL BILL,

Mr Saunders in the chair.

Mr Drake moved an amendment, which was adopted and the bill was carried. The Committee rose and reported the bill as passed.

Mr DeCosmos moved that leave be granted to introduce a bill entitled 'an Ordinance respecting the taxing, renting or selling of unoccupied agricultural lands.' Leave granted.

Mr Drake moved that leave be given to introduce a bill for supplying Victoria with water. Leave granted.

Mr Humphreys moved that leave be granted to introduce a bill entitled 'an Ordinance to repeal the Crown Salaries Acts.' Leave not granted, the Council having pronounced on the principle of the resolution.

Mr DeCosmos asked the Attorney General whether it is the intention of the government to allow the Chief Justice, or any Justice or Justices sitting as Judge of the Admiralty Court, to take fees in addition to the salaries provided for such Justices. The Attorney General replied that the matter was an Imperial one, with which neither the government nor the House could interfere.

Mr Holbrook moved an address to His Excellency, asking that provision be made for the transmission of local newspapers free within the colony. Carried.

REGISTRATION BILL

Passed the second reading to go into committee on Wednesday, 16th inst.

CROWN GRANTS BILL

Was read a second time and committed for Wednesday, 16th inst.

CONSTITUTION OF COUNCIL.

Mr DeCosmos asked the Attorney General What is the nature of the alterations which the government propose to make in the Executive Council and in the Legislative Council, which are referred to in His Excellency the Governor's opening speech.

The Attorney General replied that he could not tell—the matter was before the Imperial Government.

COMMON SCHOOLS.

Mr Wood to move 'That in addition to the Returns moved for by the Hon Mr Alston, with respect to Public Schools, His Excellency be respectfully requested to order a Return to be made of:—

1. What [if any] provision has been made for the examination of Common School Teachers, as well regarding efficiency as character.

2. What [if any] provision has been made for the visitation and inspection of Common Schools.

3. What [if any] regulation has been made for due Returns being made of the Receipts and Expenditure of Common Schools.

4. What [if any] Rules and Regulations have been made for the management and government of Common Schools.

5. What [if any] provision has been made for the establishment and election of Local Boards.

6. What [if any] provision has been made for an Annual Report of the Common Schools of British Columbia for the past year.' Carried.

CANADIAN SURVEY.

Mr Humphreys asked the hon Surveyor General for information with regard to the result of the Canadian surveying party, under Professor Bell, on the line of the projected railway from the Dominion to British Columbia.

The hon Surveyor General replied that he did not know any particulars about a survey from the Dominion to British Columbia, the matter not being within the limits of his department.

EXPORTS.

Mr Helmcken moved that His Excellency be respectfully requested to furnish returns of the exports during the past year [1869] from British Columbia. Carried.

COUNTY COURTS.

Mr Drake asked leave to bring in an Ordinance to amend the County Court Ordinance, 1867. Leave granted.

REVENUE.

The hon Mr Humphreys moved for the returns of the amount of revenue collected in the Lillooet district, including Roads' Tolls, [illegible]

SCHOOLS.

Mr Alston asked leave to bring in a bill relating to common schools. Leave granted.

PETITION OF A. WATSON.

Mr Ring asked that a day be named for the consideration of the petition of Alex. Watson.

Mr Alston moved as an amendment that it be referred to the whole house.

The Attorney General moved that it be referred to a select committee. Carried, and the following gentlemen were appointed as said committee: Messrs Ball, Ring, DeCosmos, Robson and Sanders.

INCORPORATION OF NANAIMO.

Mr Ring asked leave to bring in a bill for the incorporation of the town of Nanaimo. Leave granted.

LOANS AND FUNDED DEBT

Mr DeCosmos moved for a return of loans and funded debt. Carried.

Council adjourned to meet on Wednesday at 1 p.m.

SCOTTISH DISTILLERIES. — The *Scottish Standard* of 28th December contains a long and interesting description of the Leith Distillery, owned by Messrs Bernard & Co. The establishment is of the most extensive character, and besides long rows of buildings devoted to the production of the celebrated brand of whisky, the firm have extensive export and bottling warehouses. They also maintain a huge printing establishment and a steam sawmill and cooperage constantly engaged in the production of material for casks. The same paper contains an elaborate description of the Caledonian Distillery, at Edinburgh, owned by Messrs Meuzies, Bernard & Co. Messrs Sproat & Co are the British Columbia agents for these celebrated whiskies.

THE OMINECA MINES.—Parties of men continue to gather in here from all parts, preparatory to making a start for Peace River. The California papers seem to regard the new diggings with favor. The *Alta* and *Call* are both engaged in publishing a series of letters showing the advantages that British Columbia offers as a field of immigration. Previously these papers have been noted for their hostility to this colony. The railroad and the loss of the interior trade has opened their eyes, and they see that to maintain her commercial supremacy San Francisco must encourage and foster the coast trade. Should the new mines prove successful—of which we entertain no doubt—this colony will be a large customer of San Francisco.

FOR THE ANTHRACITE COAL MINES. — The steamer Otter has been chartered to proceed to the Queen Charlotte Coal Company's mine at Skidegate Bay and carry thither several of the directors, workmen and supplies. The work will be pushed vigorously during the approaching season, and it is highly probable that before the middle of May we shall have the pleasure of announcing the arrival of at least one large cargo of the valuable fossil at San Francisco. After leaving Skidegate the Otter will run across to the mouth of the Skeena with any Ominecabound passengers who may feel disposed to 'tackle' the *terra incognita* of the coast route.

THE Tariff prepared by the Committee of Ways and Means of the United States Congress does not provide for the abolition or reduction of the duty on bituminous coal or of the duty on fish. It provides that live animals pay 20 per cent ad valorem, oatmeal one cent per pound, flour, &c, a half cent per lb, mail 30 per cent, potatoes 15 cts per bushel, sawed spruce, hemlock and basswood, $1 per thousand, pine and all other kinds of sawed lumber $2 per thousand, pickets and palings $1 per thousand, pine and spruce clap boards 30 per cent, lime, limestone and crude gypsum 10 per cent ground gypsum 25 cents per 100 lbs, building stone $3 per measured ton.

CHINAMEN are monopolizing labor in California—on some farms white men receive $30 per month and Chinamen $50. The woollen mills have discharged all their white hands at $3 per day and taken on Chinamen at $40 per month.

IT would be madness for miners to leave Victoria for Omineca before the 1st April. Should any do so, they will have to face great privations, and, perhaps, fail in reaching the goal of their hopes.

THE sidewheel steamer California, Capt T Wright, has been successfully launched at San Francisco. She is intended as an opposition boat on the Southern Coast of California.

IMPORTS.—Mr Hamley, Collector of Customs, has issued his annual statement of imports during 1869. The value was $1,775,622 27, on which was paid duties amounting to $342,136 45—an average rate of 20 per cent.

Hayti—The Trial and Execution of Salnave.

NEW YORK, Jan 28—At the trial of Salnave in Hayti, the Deputy Marshal read the charges to the prisoner, which occupied some time, the most important being that he 'annulled the Constitution' and named himself 'Protector of the Republic;' that he associated himself with depraved characters and held on to the government by fraud and force, therefore Sylvan Salnave is accused of high treason, devastation, pillage with arms, committing assassination, and is now amenable for these crimes.'

Salnave said he was not capable of the acts of which he was accused. His counsel made a strong appeal and made every effort to destry the accusation, quoting frequently the position of Jeff Davis in the late rebellion in the United States.

'You have just been condemned to pain of death. I entreat you to be firm and courageous.' Salnave replied—

'I shall not fail; I only ask for time to put my affairs in order.'

This request was granted and he was engaged for a short time in writing a letter, which he sealed and placed in the hands of the President. Immediately after this he was pinioned and taken from the court, attended by two clergymen, to the place of execution. He was then led to a post planted for the occasion and a solemn silence ensued. The firing party was then drawn up and Gen Cabral said to Salnave: 'You are going to be executed as a traitor; Viva la Constitution.'

The words, which were the signal for the deadly volley, were taken up by the people and amid the shout of 'Viva le Constitution,' Sylvan Salnave ceased to exist. His body was then put into a cart among the felons.

(*From Gall's West India Newsletter.*)

Jamaica.

Dr Alexander Fiddes, the distinguished Surgeon died suddenly on Christmas day. He died while making his will, and before he could sign it.

Mr Rushworth, the Financial Secretary, presented his financial statement to the public on Friday 31st December. A surplus of £68,896 is shown.

The Bahamas.

It is rumored here that His Excellency Governor Rawson has been recalled to England, and that Sir Benjamin Pine of Antigua, is to take the command of the Windward Islands as Governor in Chief. The cause of Mr Rawson's removal is said to have been occasioned by legal proceedings instituted in England against him at the instance of the late Colonial Secretary, [he having been dismissed the service] of the Bahamas, charging His Excellency with being guilty of certain unlawful acts whilst holding Her Majesty's commission as Governor of the Bahamas.

Trinidad.

Private letters, received by the Mail, from influential sources in England, state that Governor Gordon will go to the Mauritius and Major Mundy to Trinidad.

The ship Wiltshire, from Calcutta, arrived on the 20th December with 606 Coolie immigrants for the plantations.

St. Lucia.

The Government have in contemplation the offering of a premium for the destruction of serpents, as they are becoming so destructive to human life in St Lucia.

Canadian Mail Summary.

Our dates are to the 16th February. The funeral of Lieut General Sir Chas A Wyndham, Commander of the Forces, took place at Montreal on the 22th. The body was deposited in the Mount Royal Cemetery; but this was only temporary, preparatory to removal to England. The ceremony was a very imposing one. Prince Arthur, accompanied by Col Hamilton, walked in rear of the funeral cortege. A. Mathieson, D D, Minister of St Andrew's Church, Montreal, died on the 14th, aged 75 years. The Reifenstein examination before the Police Magistrate had at last come to a conclusion, and the subject of it was committed for trial at the next assizes, on charges amounting in the aggregate to $14,000. On the 10th Lieut Governor Wilmot opened the Legislature of the province of New Brunswick. The following passage occurs in his speech:—'Never has the public mind of Britain been so agitated as at present upon the important subject of emigration to the British colonies. Tens of thousands of men able and willing to work and who are to a certain extent a burden upon the charities of the mother country, could in many portions of our Dominion at once earn a comfortable subsistence, and within a few years become thrifty farmers as thousands have already done, and add materially to the strength of the Empire.' Governor Hill opened the Newfoundland Legislature on the 3d. He congratulated the House upon the numerous tracts of land taken up, the number of mining licenses taken out and the fact that the revenue of the past year exceeds the estimates, notwithstanding a remission of 20 per cent. on import duty. The speech, after alluding to Confederation and Lord Granville's dispatches, concludes as follows: 'The views of an eminent British statesman, and of the highest authority on colonial affairs, need no endorsement from me—but it is quite clear that the current of opinions and events has strongly set in towards union. I firmly trust that nothing will occur to check or turn Newfoundland from gliding onwards and that the advance already made will be continued until this colony joins the Dominion, thus completing the great end so anxiously desired by the Imperial Government.' In Prince Edward Island Confederation was steadily gaining strength, and the feeling that the destiny of the Island was to become a Province of the Dominion was growing. It was thought improbable however, that the terms offered by the Dominion Cabinet would be accepted, as the Islanders appeared to concieve themselves entitled to better terms.

THE town of Santa Maura, on one of Ionian Islands was destroyed by an earthquake on the 29th December.