

THE WAR.

Let us suppose that we have been transported a hundred years ahead in point of time, and are reading what a historian in the year 2000 would say of the campaign in South Africa. This is about the way he would speak of the operations in Natal: The Boers came down from the Transvaal and from the Free State in great force and armed with the most approved modern weapons. They found a small British army at Ladysmith and victory, and several sharp engagements took place, in which the British displayed splendid courage and gained temporary successes. Although the way was opened for the British to retreat, it was deemed advisable to hold Ladysmith, which the Boer army at once invested, and leaving a sufficient force there to maintain the investment, moved down with the intention of capturing Pietermaritzburg, and then proclaiming themselves the masters of Natal. After unavoidable delays a British force arrived on the ground and forced the enemy back to the Tugela river, where he strongly entrenched himself. The first two attempts to penetrate these defences and relieve Ladysmith were unsuccessful, although the soldiers displayed brilliant courage. It was soon seen that frontal attacks against an entrenched enemy were almost certain to be unsuccessful under the circumstances existing in warfare at that time. The British general in command deemed it wise to withdraw a part of his force from its touch with the enemy after the failure of the second attempt, and advance along another line. This is as far as we can now feel sure the historian will go as to Gen. Buller's force, but he will have much to say as to the heroic defence of Ladysmith against an immensely superior force. But we can suppose him to be able to say something like this: Gen. Buller's third attempt was crowned with success; the Ladysmith garrison was relieved, and the enemy retreated in confusion from Natal. If this is the conclusion of the story, is there a man who will say that the great advantage to be derived from handling the trade of these present and potential goldfields, it is wiser policy now. There is no pressing need for new lines of railway across the disputed territory. One road is already in operation, and it will be a sufficiently formidable competitor to any line that can be constructed from points on the seaboard of British Columbia, as at present recognized, without anything being done to call similar railways into existence to build up towns, like Skagway, on territory which we may never own, and where our trade with our own country may at any time be subject to harassing customs regulations. At present no such difficulties exist, but we cannot afford to allow our own interests to remain dependent upon the whim of the government at Washington. If we are not to have the ownership of the Yukon, we must have an all-Canadian line from a point further down the coast.

THE B. C. CONTINGENT.

We wish at the outset to say that anything which the Colonist has said or done, or may hereafter say or do, in connection with the British Columbia South African contingent must not be understood as having any political aspect. Our object is to assist the provincial government in any way in our power to carry out the proposal, which has received such cordial endorsement from the people of the province. The provincial government has very little official information as to the status of the British Columbia contingent. The few despatches printed in the Colonist have not been supplemented by official communications to the provincial premier. We have some reason to suppose that possibly the Minister of Militia may be communicating with Mr. Semlin by mail instead of by wire. We do not think there is any reason to suppose that the offer of this province has been or is likely to be received in any other than a manner keeping with the spirit in which it was made. Indeed when Dr. Borden told Ottawa correspondent in so many words that the offer of the province had been accepted, it was in response to a direct query sent out from this office, accompanied with instructions to get explicit information on this point. It is true that our advisers are considerably ahead of those received by the government, but a live newspaper can beat a government any day in getting the news.

Under the circumstances, and so as to save as much time as possible, we suggest to Mr. Semlin that he would be wise to begin the preparatory work at the earliest possible date. The offer to command the contingent ought to be selected; men to be chosen at each should be decided upon; inquiries ought to be instituted as to the practicability of getting suitable horses in the shortest possible time and the cost of them; the questions concerning uniforms and equipment ought to be looked into, so that the moment official notification to get ready comes from Ottawa, no time need be lost. As a practical way of dealing with the matter we suggest that the commanding officer should be selected and invited to carry on all necessary inquiries, the government defraying the cost, which would, of course, not include any pay to such officer. We trust that the people of the province will fully sustain the government in any such steps and that the only ground upon which any complaints are likely to arise is the apparent hesitation to inaugurate these preliminary steps which will undoubtedly be necessary sooner or later.

Col. Gregory has handed us a letter from a gentleman, whose place of business is on Wharf street, who writes: "Did you notice that the Duke of Portland says his brother, Lord C. Portland, mentioned that telescopes are very badly needed at the front in South Africa? Now, I have two and will give them. If you will take charge and ensure the British Columbia contingent or British Columbia scouts get them. Every one of Lord Stratford's Horse should have one, and the officers have field glasses. In fact it would be better

if all the scouts had field glasses. Can't some of you make it known that telescopes and field glasses are wanted, and get up 500 or 1,000 right here in Victoria? What are we doing as private citizens compared with the people of Great Britain? Why nothing—absolutely nothing. We ought to supply our Canadian fellows on guard at Ladysmith with glasses. I notice that in the Old Country they are supplying a detachment of special sharpshooters with field glasses."

NORTHERN RAILWAYS.

The claims of persons who have invested money in northern railways in this province may always properly be considered by the legislature. All bona fide proposals to construct new railway lines have always been considered by the legislature and examined fully. But far more important than any questions affecting individuals are those which affect the country as a whole, and especially such as have a bearing upon territorial matters, must always far outweigh private considerations.

The Colonist takes no new ground when it urges that the British Columbia legislature should do nothing, which will lead to the concentration of the carrying trade of Northern British Columbia and the Yukon at towns in what may by and by be determined to be the territory of the United States. We have contended against such a course of action ever since the Yukon was proved to have become a gold-producing region. We have always insisted that, if we are not to have the head of Lynn Canal declared to be in Canada, it is absolutely imperative that a railway shall be built from the Yukon waters to the British Columbia seaboard. The force of this contention, which we think meets with the unanimous support of the people of this province, is as great as ever it was. Indeed it is even greater, for since it was first made, the Atlin district has come to the front as a gold-producing region, and news of discoveries on the Salmon river and elsewhere shows that we cannot at present set any limit to the possible developments of this northern country. So if two years ago it was wise policy to shape the legislation of the province as to the Yukon, it is even more so now. We have always insisted that, if we are not to have the head of Lynn Canal declared to be in Canada, it is absolutely imperative that a railway shall be built from the Yukon waters to the British Columbia seaboard. The force of this contention, which we think meets with the unanimous support of the people of this province, is as great as ever it was. Indeed it is even greater, for since it was first made, the Atlin district has come to the front as a gold-producing region, and news of discoveries on the Salmon river and elsewhere shows that we cannot at present set any limit to the possible developments of this northern country. So if two years ago it was wise policy to shape the legislation of the province as to the Yukon, it is even more so now.

the United States, and that we may not find ourselves estopped, thereby, from disputing the sovereignty. In this view of the case it would be extremely injudicious to pass such charters and trust to their being disallowed by the Governor-General, for the United States could very properly claim that the legislature of this province, after their attention had been called to the principle involved, passed the charters and thereby recognized the claims of the United States government. Members of the legislature must remember that what they do in such matters is not done in a corner. The United States has a very observant consul in Victoria, whose duty it is to report to his government anything done by our legislature or any one else of interest to that government, and we may feel very sure that a matter of this kind, bearing so directly and strongly upon the claims made by the United States to what we all maintain is rightfully a part of British Columbia, would be promptly reported. Can any one imagine the congress of the United States or the legislature of any of the states passing legislation, which would even in a remote way be construed as a recognition by them of Canada's claim to this disputed territory? Has not the United States government, at every stage of the negotiations in regard to the transportation of goods across the disputed territory, taken care to do nothing that can be construed into an admission of our claim, and shall the legislature of this province which is so much more deeply concerned in this matter than the Dominion as a whole, or any of the provinces, not exercise at least an equal degree of care, especially as the federal government has led the way and our refusal to follow might very easily construed to mean that we do not propose to insist upon the claim to sovereignty over the disputed territory?

There are other phases of the question which remain to be considered, but this article is already so long that we must let them stand over for the present, merely remarking as to one that if the occupation by United States citizens of Skagway is an argument against transferring that port to Canada, the occupation by such citizens of ports at the termini of other railways will be an equally formidable argument. We need, therefore, Mr. Semlin will see his way clear at an early date to declare to the legislature that the policy of the government is not to permit the construction of railways to connect with lines across the disputed territory, until the boundary question has been settled.

THE KITIMAAT ROAD.

A proposition looking to the construction of a road from Kitimaat Inlet to Hazelton is before the provincial government. It has been submitted by several Montana gentlemen. The plan is that for 30,000 acres of land, to be selected in alternate blocks, and certain rights for the reclamation of tide flats, the applicants will construct a highway road from Kitimaat to Hazelton, a distance of 100 miles. The estimated cost is \$100,000, so that the offer is substantially \$3.33 per acre for the land. This cannot properly be called a bonus for a road. It is a proposed contract for the construction of a road, the price to be paid in land.

The Colonist inquired of the manager of the Montana syndicate as to what they expected to make out of such a contract and found him quite ready to explain. The road itself will yield no revenue, for it is to be a public highway. It will render the adjacent land more valuable for settlement, and the promoters hope to be able to dispose of it for more than it costs them. They expect to colonize the land, and this will mean that a town and perhaps more than one will be built up. Mills will be erected to saw the timber in which the region abounds, and there will be a great deal of traffic through to Omineca, of which the syndicate expects to be able to handle a share. There is a large area of good grazing land, and it is anticipated that cattle raising will become an important industry. Whether the syndicate has any mining properties in view, which the building of this road would develop, is not stated. It has been stated that the syndicate has been proposed by the government of this province, and that the proposition has not received the approval of the government, it has not been rejected. It has some features which commend it. We do not suppose a route to Hazelton can ever be got more cheaply. We do not now write to endorse the proposal, the acceptance or rejection of which must be left to the government, but only to inform the public of the nature of the offer, which, as readers will remember, was mentioned some weeks ago at the quarterly meeting of the Board of Trade. It is a matter that ought to receive investigation, and we shall be glad to have an expression of opinion as to its desirability.

THE LEGISLATURE.

If a law should be passed to hang men for being handsome, we do not know that there would be any necessity for the British Columbia legislature to take some one-half of the freights of the coast of the cable, provided the Imperial government did the same, which with the contribution of the British Columbia government would have provided a requisite sum and assured the early completion of the enterprise. It has been therefore with the greatest regret that this government observed that a check had been sustained by the refusal of the Imperial government to meet your government's proposal. With the aim of strengthening the hands of your government and of inducing the Imperial government to reconsider its decision, this government decided to send a telegram to the Imperial government, and it will await with anxiety your reply that your efforts have been successful, and that at last the negotiations of several years have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. Although this government understands from the despatches which have appeared in the newspapers, the Imperial government proposes to make an annual contribution to any deficiency which may occur in the earnings of the cable to meet the expenses of its operation, and in the interest of a larger sum than would be its share if it became the owner of the cable, this government considers that it is of the greatest importance that the Imperial government should be a co-partner in the scheme, whether to the extent proposed or of a smaller one. It is of great moment that the necessary capital should be obtained on the most favorable terms, and this end it is essential that an Imperial guarantee should be given jointly with that of the various colonial governments. As this government has been disclosed by press reports, which may or may not be accurate, in its attitude towards the subject, it is fully and it would suggest that even should the Imperial government decline to accept the proposed scheme, it might be inclined to give its guarantee to the British Columbia government, and in the event of the Imperial government entering into a joint indemnity to it against any financial loss from the giving of such guarantee.

where and might very well be followed here. As representing the various interests of the province the membership is fairly well divided. The lawyers number seven. We do not think this too many. It is a mistake to complain, as so many people do, against the presence of lawyers in the house. Careful scrutiny of bills by members of the legal profession is absolutely necessary, and experience shows that scrutiny better exercised when there is free discussion than elsewhere. Consequently a lack of lawyers on the floor of the house cannot be made up by the employment of a law clerk. The medical profession has one representative. Journalism has two of its active members on the floor of the house. Educational work has four representatives. Some eight or ten members can claim to be practical ranchers or cattle raisers. Of course every man in British Columbia is interested to some extent in mining, and so the whole thirty-eight can be put down to the credit of that industry, but there are at least seven members who can claim to be special representatives of the transportation industry, and members to its credit. Mercantile pursuits are represented by some seven or eight gentlemen actively engaged in business. The investing classes have several gentlemen on the floor, who can properly be assigned to them. Loyalty and patriotic devotion to the interests of the Empire have thirty-eight active representatives. Censoriously this house is stronger than its predecessors, and it is legitimate freedom of discussion were permitted the debates would be both lively and valuable. Just here a word as to the value of debates. There is really no phase of legislative work which is of greater value. Keen discussion, vigorous passages-at-arms across the house, the thorough thrashing out of personalities within reasonable limits, tend to the development of sound public opinion and to the begetting of a lively interest in public affairs. There is in the house plenty of talent for such discussion and it is a pity that it is not more extensively utilized.

Cool Million For the Cable.

How the Provincial Inspiration Was Laid Before the Dominion Government.

British Columbia's Interest in Pacific Commerce Warrant for the Offer.

The total of correspondence with relation to the Pacific cable offer the local government asked for by resolution of the legislature, has been laid before the house, and is as follows:

REPLY TO THE HOUSE. Mr. F. CARTER-COTTON, Minister of Finance.

Dear Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 28th inst., respecting the proposed method of participation in the project into harmony with that proposed by the Dominion government. In any case I trust that you will introduce a bill at this session of parliament, authorizing your government to take action in relation to the proposed cable, so that any delay on the part of the Imperial government in modifying their proposals will not necessarily prevent any action being taken until the Dominion parliament meets again.

I am, dear Sir, very respectfully,
Yours faithfully,
F. CARTER-COTTON,
Minister of Finance.

REPLY TO THE HOUSE. Mr. F. CARTER-COTTON, Minister of Finance.

Dear Sir: I sent you last evening the following telegram from the telegram I have now received from the Dominion government, which is in accordance with the above telegram by stating that this government will be prepared to assume the responsibility for one-half of the cost of the cable on the same terms and under the same arrangements in respect to the control and management of the enterprise as have been proposed by the Dominion government.

This government of course realizes that as that of a province of the Dominion it will have to bear its share, with the government of the other provinces, of any responsibility incurred by the Dominion in regard to the enterprise; it also recognizes the fact that in making this offer it departs somewhat from the course which a provincial government would generally follow in regard to a federal enterprise. But in the opinion of this government there are sound reasons for its adoption of the course which has been intimated to you. As the province which sits on the Pacific coast, B.C. is most directly and chiefly interested in any scheme of the object of which is to foster and develop commerce with all the communities bordering on that ocean. It has sometimes seemed that the Dominion government has not fully grasped the possibilities of this Pacific commerce, and of the events which are now transpiring, destined, as this government believes, to have an immense influence on the policies and fortunes of the great powers of the world.

This government therefore viewed with much satisfaction the decision taken by your government a few weeks ago to assume one-half of the freights of the coast of the cable, provided the Imperial government did the same, which with the contribution of the British Columbia government would have provided a requisite sum and assured the early completion of the enterprise. It has been therefore with the greatest regret that this government observed that a check had been sustained by the refusal of the Imperial government to meet your government's proposal. With the aim of strengthening the hands of your government and of inducing the Imperial government to reconsider its decision, this government decided to send a telegram to the Imperial government, and it will await with anxiety your reply that your efforts have been successful, and that at last the negotiations of several years have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

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Faithfully yours,
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New Millions In Copper.

Howe Sound Deposits Warrant One of the Greatest Camps in the World.

Positive Assertions Which If Verified Mean Much for the Coast Cities.

Government Asked For Six Mile Wagon Road to Permit Development.

Howard C. Walters, representing the Britannia Copper Syndicate Ltd., now in process of incorporation, said:

"Truth is undoubtedly more strange than fiction, occasionally at least; and in the matter of the Howe Sound copper belt this is undoubtedly true. Since we have visited the district, go into its visible merits thoroughly and report its conclusions with any reasonable expectancy that it will be believed. Such has been my experience, and although my report upon the properties, included in the Britannia group, has been fully confirmed by expert testimony of gentlemen from Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Montana and Washington, I can readily understand the incredulity of the lines of communications received from the principals of these properties as to the value of the copper belt. It is a fact that they have been fully confirmed by expert testimony of gentlemen from Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Montana and Washington, I can readily understand the incredulity of the lines of communications received from the principals of these properties as to the value of the copper belt. 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