

## Rosland Weekly Miner.

Published Every Thursday by the  
ROSSLAND MINER PRINTING & PUBLISHING CO.  
LIMITED LIABILITY.

LONDON OFFICE:  
C. J. WALKER, 24 Coleman Street, London.

TORONTO OFFICE:  
CENTRAL PRESS AGENCY, Ltd., 83 Yonge St.

SPOKANE OFFICE:  
ALEXANDER & Co. Advertising Agents, Room  
First National Bank Building.

EASTERN AGENT:  
MANUEL KATZ, 230 Temple Court, New York

THE SUBSCRIPTION PRICE OF THE WEEKLY  
ROSSLAND MINER for all points in the United  
States and Canada is Two and one-half Dollars a  
year or One Dollar and fifty cents for six months  
or all other countries Three and one-half Dol-  
lars a year—invariably in advance.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Daily, per month, by carrier..... 75c  
Daily, per month, by mail..... 80c

Daily, per year, by carrier..... \$ 8.25  
Daily, per year, by mail..... 8.50

Daily, per year, foreign..... 10.25

Weekly, per half year..... \$ 1.50  
Weekly, per year..... 2.50

Subscriptions invariably in advance.

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Weekly, per half year..... \$ 1.50  
Weekly, per year..... 2.50

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THE EAST KOOTENAY SCANDAL.

The East Kootenay scandal continues

to occupy the attention of the provin-

cial legislature. It has created a polit-

ical maelstrom that will yet engulf

the Chief Commissioner of Lands and

Works and, probably, the Attorney-

General. But those who would not

propose to succumb without a strug-

gle. They know that if they are swept

away the Government will be swept

with them, for they are necessary to

the Government's existence.

There are, however, some honest men

in the Government party. The time is

rapidly approaching when these honest

men will have to adopt one of two

courses.

They will have to either stand by the

country and free it from the grasp of

scoundrels who are attempting to rob

the people of 900,000 acres of immensely

valuable land or they will fall in with

the plans of these scoundrels and pro-

long the alleged investigation until the

legislature has adjourned. A bold stand

on the part of the honest members of

the House, and Wells and Eberts are

done for and the Province—particularly

the Kootenays—will prosper as never be-

fore; but the moment they begin to assist

in the whitewashing of the land grabbers,

in order to save the government, they

will be as much to blame as the chief

conspirator, and will suffer the same

disgrace.

CANADA'S PROGRESS.

Finance Minister Fielding will have

the pleasure of announcing a surplus

for the current fiscal year of \$13,000,000

on consolidated fund account, or \$9,000,-

000 if the capital account expenditure

is also deducted. This \$13,000,000 is

supposed to be available for reduction of

the public debt, and to be equal to the

net increase in that debt for which the

present government is responsible. A

rapid increase of the revenue naturally

tempts to increased expenditure on the

part of any government, and it would

be wonderful if all the expenditure

were wisely inspired. For the present,

at all events, there must be an addi-

tion to the country's disbursements be-

cause of the very circumstances that

result in raising the income to higher

figures. The population is increasing

at a rate not equalled in many years

past, and there appears to be every

likelihood of the rate of increase being

maintained, if not added to, in coming

years.

In a review of the immigration season

so far the Toronto Globe recently said:

"No more significant sign of the times

is to be observed in Canada today than

the spring tide of immigration pouring

into the west from Europe and from

the bordering American states. The

movement has reached the proportions

of those great swarms of population

that in a single half-century carried

the land-hungry American from the

crest of the Alleghenies to the blue Pa-

cific. The Canadian west has been

discovered by the sons of men who

taken up. The entire supply of free

land has been exhausted in the States.

With this exhaustion there has come

a slow but gradual rise in the price of

cereals. Demand now follows swiftly

on the heels of supply—there are prac-

tically no more public lands to fall

back upon. Grain will remain high;

the farmer will take the place in the

world for which he was destined and

which he once did occupy. The prices

of agricultural products will never

again fall to the low level of a few

years ago. If Mr. Bookwalter's judg-

ment is correct Canada will in future

profit to an even greater degree than in

recent years by her immense areas of

rich and free lands. The prairies will

settle up fast. British Columbia will

not attract immigrants so freely at

first, but there must be some overflow

from the country east of the moun-

tains, and in no long time the stream

will commence to grow. Already there

are increased demands for our fruit,

stock and lumber because of the peo-

pling of the Territories, and the op-

portunities in these lines cannot fail to

attract the attention of outsiders. The

evident approach of a keener demand

for land in this province ought to have

the effect of summarily ending the

system of corporation grants.

BRITAIN'S INTEREST INCREASE-

ING.

That Canada, with her wonderful re-

sources, and her progressive people, has

at last stirred the conservative inter-

est of the Motherland, there are many evi-

dences. We hear much comment from

time to time regarding the impossibility

of persuading Great Britain to adopt

a preferential tariff, and yet it is in-

teresting to know that during the past

month rousing meetings held at a num-

ber of Great Britain's industrial centres,

including Glasgow and Bristol, carried

unanimous resolutions advocating that

a preference of no less than 3 shillings

per cwt. should be given to colonial

food products. The interesting informa-

tion is also to hand that a large party

of representatives from the British

houses of parliament will tour Canada

next August. Needless to say these

marks of attention from the British

public, and the statesmen of the old

land will awaken a warm response in

Canada, and our people will give every

encouragement to the growing sympathy

and interest of Great Britain.

A NEST OF TRAITORS.

The Chief Commissioner of Lands and

Works, in answer to a question de-

livered in the House last Thursday,

declared that the reason for the refusal

of coal and petroleum licenses in South-

east Kootenay "was a matter of govern-

ment policy, as was also the mainte-

nance of a reserve on these lands."

This was a formal reply to a formal

question. The Chief Commissioner's

statement was carefully and deliberately

prepared. The other ministers undoubt-

edly knew the nature of the reply in ad-

vance of the House, and had sanctioned

it; otherwise they would have objected

to what the Chief Commissioner said.

The natural and only inference is that

the Chief Commissioner has forced the

Administration to make his iniquitous

policy a government policy. This makes

the other ministers just as guilty of

malfeasance as is the Chief Commis-

sioner.

It is not so surprising that Attorney-

General Eberts should follow the lead

of Chief Commissioner Wells, but that

the premier and the other ministers,

Prentice and McInnes, should permit

the Government to be pledged to such

a disgraceful policy is almost incredible,

because it means political suicide to each

House concerning the government's re-

fusal to grant the licenses have brought

out reluctant answers from the Chief

Commissioner, that help to make out

a strong case against him and the Gov-

ernment. But the honest members of

the House must not let the matter

drop there. It is their bounden duty

to go pin down the ministers that they

cannot escape. The Minister ventures the

opinion that some decidedly interesting

situations will be revealed if the Opposi-

tion will call for all the correspond-

ence between the Department of Lands

and Works and the applicants for

licenses, which, we are informed, POSI-

TIVELY STATES THAT A RESERVE

DOES EXIST ON THE LANDS

IN QUESTION, AND WHICH CON-

VEYS THE IDEA THAT IT IS HOPE-

LESS FOR THE APPLICANTS TO

PERSEVERE IN THEIR ATTEMPTS

TO SECURE TITLES.

It is useless for the Government to

persist in its present attitude with re-

spect to these East Kootenay licenses.

The game is up so far as the ringsters

and the coal monopoly are concerned.

The Minister defies the Government to

show good cause for its present atti-

tude on this question.

SIR OLIVER MOWAT.

Sir Oliver Mowat, Ontario's veteran

statesman, has seemingly, at this writing,

but a few hours to live. He has reached

the ripe age of 83, and according to the

common rule could not have lived many

years longer, but all Canada will regret

that an accident should have hastened

his death by even a brief term. No man

who has been connected with public

affairs in this country has been held in

higher respect and esteem than this

grand old man of the premier province.

From 1872 to 1896, he held uninterrupted-

ly the office of premier of Ontario, a

term unparalleled in the career of any

other Canadian statesman. At its close

he voluntarily retired to take a place

in the Dominion cabinet formed by Sir

Wilfrid Laurier, and since 1898 he has

been lieutenant governor of his native

province. So great a political success

could only have waited upon the career

of a man of extraordinary ability and

extremely high character. The length

of his public service is most emphatic

testimony to his good qualities, and op-

ponents as well as friends have yielded

him freely admiration and respect. For

many years Sir Oliver's rival in Ontario

politics was the present Chief Justice

Meredith, an exceedingly strong and able

man. It is altogether likely that Mr.

Meredith would have been strong enough

to overcome any weaker antagonist, for

the liking and respect extended to him

were but a few degrees less than those

which the leader of the government

drew forth.

Mr. Oliver Mowat's public service did

not begin with his accession to the On-

tario premiership. He entered the old

Canadian parliament first in 1857, and

was identified with three pre-Confeder-

ation ministers. One was the short-lived

Brown-Dorion government of 1853, the

second the Sanford Macdonald-Dorion

government in 1863-64, and the last the

Tache coalition government, which was

organised with confederation in view.

He was one of the prominent figures at

the Quebec conference in 1864, when the

scheme of confederation was finally

drawn up. In the same year he became

vice-chancellor of Upper Canada, re-

taining the office after confederation.

On the Hon. Edward Blake's retirement