

The Colonist.

MONDAY, MARCH 13, 1899.

THE CABINET SHUFFLE.

There has been a shuffle across James Bay, which will be interesting news to certain gentlemen, who have been looking with anxious eyes in that direction in anticipation of changes, which would lead to their promotion. Mr. Semlin has given up his position as Commissioner of Public Works and taken that of Provincial Secretary, with which we understand the duties of Minister of Education are to be associated. Mr. Cotton takes the Public Works Department in addition to that of Finance, a combination of offices which we think will not be regarded as judicious. With every appreciation of Mr. Cotton's ability, we have to doubt if he is competent to do justice to the task that he has assumed. Mr. Hume remains at the head of the Department of Mines, and is undoubtedly better fitted for that position than any other member of the government. He will find sufficient to keep him busy, if he does his duty, as he doubtless will. The Colonist has for some time been of the opinion that the Department of Mines should have a separate status. Mr. Martin remains Attorney-General.

In its mention of these changes, the Times feels called upon to state that Mr. Semlin says they were made entirely upon his initiative. We suppose this is intended to forestall any suspicion that they were made by direction of Mr. Martin. No very great interest attaches to the changes, except so far as they demonstrate to certain supporters of the government that they have been played with. Promises of political preferment, of course vaguely expressed, were as plenty as blackberries during the session. When our neighbor, Mr. Higgins, came to the rescue of the government on the Reputation Bill, he undoubtedly was animated by the belief that his friendship would receive a reward in the shape of the Provincial Secretaryship, which he thought he would be safe in accepting after the disfranchising of a hundred or more of the electors of Esquimaux. One or more members from the Interior would quite hope that the official lightning would strike them, and they had their lightning rods conspicuously displayed. But this was not Mr. Martin's plan. He has a cabinet now which he can use as he likes. He has given Mr. Cotton sufficient prominence to patronage to gratify his ambitions. For himself he aims higher. He wants power, and he certainly has it. How long he will keep it is another story, and the new shuffle will have a tendency to loosen his hold.

A NEW NATIONAL POLICY.

We find in the Toronto Globe an editorial under the above caption, and emphasis is given to it by "double-leading." The article, appearing as it does on the eve of a session of parliament and in the face of the interruption of negotiations with the United States, is so very significant that we quote some of its principal paragraphs. It opens as follows: "Canadians have at the present moment a rare opportunity of enforcing a new National Policy, a National Policy affecting products which are more truly native products than even those of the farm or orchard. In these we have rivals everywhere, but in white pine, in pulpwood, in nickel, in lead, we have commodities in which we enjoy some of the nature of a complete or partial monopoly. We were quite willing to turn these into the continental volume of exchange, but as this has been vetoed through no fault of ours, the next movement must be to make the very most possible out of the advantage. Many persons will agree with us when we say that the Globe has been exceedingly tardy in recognizing this to be the correct policy for Canada, and the same observation applies to the political leaders, whose views, it is to be supposed, the Toronto organ now expresses. If the course now favored by the Globe had been taken a year ago, the Canadian commissioners would probably not have returned from Washington empty-handed. However, better late than never, and as the Liberal party is in the saddle, every one will be glad to see that it has awakened to its duty in the premises. Perhaps the disappointment caused by the collapse of negotiations with the United States is not too dear a price to pay for this recognition of the cardinal principle of the Conservative party by the men now in power. Next to the carrying out of Conservative principles by Conservatives, the adoption of those principles by Liberals is most to be desired. "The first matter discussed by the Globe is the pulp industry, and it points out that the free access to the forests of Canada is all that enables the pulp makers of the United States to control foreign markets. The American manufacturer is handicapped by a short home supply, which is diminishing every year. The vice-president of the American Pulp and Paper Association is quoted as authority for the statement that Canada can become a powerful rival of the United States, even in the domestic market. The Globe thinks the Ontario legislature should promote pulp manufacture by prohibiting the exportation of logs from Crown lands. As a general proposition the exportation of raw produce, which can be manufactured at home is mistaken policy, because an article in its finished form means the employment of more labor and consequently the paying out of more money than are involved in the export of the raw material, perhaps even two or three times as much in many cases. The Globe next speaks of the nickel industry. Nickel matte is admitted duty free into the United States, and consequently it does not pay to erect refin-

eries in Canada. Yet we almost control the nickel supply of the world. There are mines in New Caledonia, but they are not serious competitors. The way to secure the erection of a Canadian refinery is to place a prohibitive export duty on nickel matte, and the Globe says "the government has the power to impose it and should use it fearlessly."

The article closes with a reference to the lead industry in this province and some general observations which we quote: "The condition of silver-lead mining in British Columbia should also be inquired into. The same tariff game is worked there with respect to the lead, so that of the growing production in British Columbia the American smelting companies get an undue proportion. The duty amounts to about \$23 a ton on the lead. In 1897 British Columbia miners paid \$400,000 for the privilege of having their ores admitted to the United States for treatment, and the amount would probably be \$800,000 or \$900,000 in 1898. Of this large sum but little goes into the revenues of the United States, for when the smelter exports the lead to Canada or Great Britain the duty of one and a half cents per pound is remitted and goes into his pocket. All that the miner receives is about \$20 a ton for the lead contained in the ore, while if he buys it back from the smelter it costs him from \$80 to \$80 a ton. In a recent interview Mr. D. D. Mann said:—"The silver mining industry in Canada, if properly fostered, will give more employment, pay bigger wages and enrich more people than the lumber, fishing and sealing industries of the Dominion combined." This may be somewhat exaggerated, but it at least shows the opinion of a shrewd observer who knows what he speaks. It is well worthy of careful inquiry, with the view of seeing if this waste is at all necessary, and whether it could not be corrected by a strong policy. Retaliation would be a foolish policy. All that is aimed at is to do what seems to be to our advantage, and when the prospective advantages exceed any temporary disadvantages we should not hesitate to plan for the future. The people, we believe, will support the various governments in pursuing a wise, bold and self-sufficient Canadian policy, while steadily pursuing the idea of gaining a constantly increasing market for our commodities in the motherland and affording a reciprocal market for British goods here. "This is certainly a notable argument to find in the columns of the Globe, and while it would not be in human nature to refrain from congratulating it upon its conversion to Conservative principles, we must express the hope that the views advanced by it will be carried into effect at the earliest possible day.

THE DUTY OF THE GOVERNMENT. We have not the slightest intention of getting into a discussion with the Columbia over the best way of bringing up the question of woman suffrage, and shall confine what we have to say in reply to its article of the 8th inst. to the original proposition—namely, that it is the duty of the government of the day to assume the responsibility of legislation. Our contemporary asks what would happen if the government should be divided on a question introduced by a private member. The answer cannot be given off-hand. The lieutenant-governor has not one adviser, but as many as there are members of the cabinet, and if on any matter there is a division of opinion in the council, it would become the duty of the lieutenant-governor to decide whether he should accept the advice of the majority or the minority. In minor matters the members of the government would doubtless reconcile their differences before tendering His Honor their advice; but when a measure is one affecting the political constitution of the province, and the views of the members of the government are radically different, it would become the duty of the several members to lay their opinions before His Honor, and the latter would thereupon have to decide which he should accept. Applying this principle to the matter of woman suffrage, and supposing that a bill providing for this change in the election law should pass the house after being introduced by a private member, the government dividing upon it, it is to be assumed that the ministers who voted against the bill would decline to advise the lieutenant-governor to assent to it. In that event the responsibility of the situation would rest upon the lieutenant-governor. The probability is that the measure being one that made a radical change in the political constitution of the province, and never having been a question at a general election, he would decline to accept the advice of those who recommended it to assent to it. He would know that if he approved the bill, the dissenting ministers would forthwith resign, which might lead to the defeat of the government, and would certainly lead to bye-elections, when the bill, already law, would be the issue. This would be very undesirable. He might say—and this would be the safest course—that he would not give his assent, but he would not undertake to form a government and appeal to the people.

That Transportation Advertisement. The publicity given to the absurd advertisements for the transportation of supplies to the Yukon, by the Colonist's article of yesterday, has had the effect of arousing men of all shades of politics in protest against it. Strong protests will be made at Ottawa, and we believe the advertisement will be recalled. A prominent Liberal says that the ridiculous proposal is the result of the influence of Mr. Healey, of the Alaska Commercial Company, with Major Walsh, whose ideas receive more weight with the department of the interior than they ought to. As Mr. Healey's company is practically the only one that would undertake to make a contract for such a service as was specified in the call for tenders, the plan was substantially to give him the job at his own price. This looks like a reasonable explanation, but it is quite too barefaced a proposition to succeed.

THE MILITIA.

No doubt Major-General Hutton is right when he says that the Canadian militia lack a great deal in the way of organization, and equally without doubt is the readiness of Canadians to bear their share of the Imperial burden. At the same time we are not disposed to accept the view that our citizen soldiers are more ornamental than useful. The motto of the Canadian volunteer force has been tried on more than one occasion, and has never been found wanting. Not many of us think about war, and the proportion of Canadians who thirst for military glory is small, yet if the occasion ever should arise for them to take the field, the boys of Canada would show that they have the old fighting instinct in them. Those who remember the Peninsular campaigns will recall that there was no lack of enthusiasm, no difficulty about getting the companies filled up, no skulking. Officers and men were alike ready to meet the enemy, and those who did give a very good account of themselves. The experience of the United States during the war with Spain and in the hostilities in the Philippines shows that men taken from the farm and the workshop are readily seasoned to the work of the soldier. The Anglo-Saxon leads himself readily to discipline, and he possesses his full share of courage. Any re-organization of the Canadian militia which fails to take account of this will only be partly successful. A central corps is needed around which the militia can rally; organization of the most complete kind is requisite so that in the event of war local commanders would know what to do, and what would be expected of them; the most modern equipment ought to be provided, and the men should be trained sufficiently to become skilled in its use, and a plan of mobilization ought to be settled upon. Complete organization and equipment have a wonderful effect upon the morale of any force. In these the Canadian militia is lacking, and if Major-General Hutton can discover how they can be supplied, he will deserve well of Canada.

It is stated in London that United States Ambassador Choate is instructed by his government to negotiate a general treaty of arbitration with Great Britain under which the Alaskan boundary question, among others, can be disposed of, in case the Anglo-American commission, if it re-assembles, fails to settle it.

CANADIAN AUTHORS.

The preliminary steps have been taken at Toronto for the organization of a Canadian Society of Authors. The intention of the promoters is to make the association as representative as possible. At the first meeting the question of copyright was considered, and Hon. G. W. Ross read a paper on the subject. This is interesting as a statement of the existing status of the copyright law, which may be summarized as follows: "A British author by publishing his work in the United Kingdom secures a copyright in all the British possessions, and no colonial legislature can prohibit the importation of such works into a colony. Reciprocity of copyright exists between Great Britain, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Hayti and Tunis, so that the observation just made applies to books published in either of those countries. A British author can obtain a copyright in the United States by printing and publishing his work simultaneously in Great Britain and the United States, and an American author can obtain a British copyright by registering his work in Stationers' Hall, London. The apparent advantage of this arrangement is with the United States, but in practice it works out beneficially to the British author, because of the vast market affected by the United States. A Canadian author by printing, publishing and registering his work in Canada obtains a copyright in the British Empire. A United States author can obtain a Canadian copyright by registering his work in Stationers' Hall, London, and by printing and publishing it in Canada. Canadian publishers may obtain the copyright of works for Canada, but this will not prevent the British publisher from sending copies of the same works into the Dominion. The aim of the society of authors is to secure such amendments to the British copyright law as will enable Canadian publishers to protect themselves against British editions of their copyrighted works. The argument is that this would strengthen the publishing houses by securing them the local field, and would enable the publishers to extend greater encouragement to Canadian authors.

If the Society of Authors can accomplish this it will have given abundant justification for its organization; but it may be made very useful in other respects. Relatively to its population, Canada has produced many authors of merit. Unfortunately for the fame of the Dominion the writer has been flooded by the United States has led many of our native writers to seek a home there, and this will always be the case, no matter what any society may strive to accomplish. Writers, like other producers, will always take their wares to the best market. Nevertheless the new society can do much to advance the interests of Canadian literature. A word may be said in this connection as to Canadian literature. The public seem to expect that a Canadian writer will select Canadian subjects in preference to any others. This is a mistake. No other writers are so circumscribed. A British author seeks through the whole world for his theme, and so do the writers of every other nationality. Canadian literature may properly deal with subjects pertaining to any country. Indeed if it is to receive cosmopolitan recognition, it must be cosmopolitan in its character.

SIBERIA.

The construction of the trans-Siberian railway is naturally directing a great deal of attention to the little known portion of the world through which it is being built. Canada is particularly interested in the future of this region, for it is our next door neighbor to the west. Asiatic Russia has an area of 6,564,778 square miles and a population of 13,294,687; but what is meant when we speak of Siberia contains but a population of 4,838,496 square miles, inhabited by 4,903,281 people. The other Russian territory in Asia consists of the trans-Caucasian region, Turkestan and the Trans-Caspian district. A very considerable portion of Siberia must be left out of any calculation based upon its capacity to support a civilized population. The total area fit for permanent occupation by a highly civilized community is considerably less than the similar area in Canada. It contains a great variety of soils and other resources, including all kinds of minerals and timber. The climate necessarily varies, but in the habitable portion it is well adapted for the development of a fine race. A recent traveller, who has had excellent opportunities for observation, says that the people of Siberia are greatly advanced from the position occupied by those of European Russia. They have not felt the iron hand of the government to as great an extent as those who reside nearer the capital of the empire. Many of them are the descendants of political exiles, and are therefore of broader views than the great majority of the people generally. In the cities the most progressive social conditions exist, with a high degree of refinement. The effect of the existence of a vast area of territory such as the foregoing cannot fail to be very profound upon the Russian character and its political institutions. It will furnish the solvent for the great political problem of the nation. When the Russian peasantry begin to move eastward to take possession of this new land, they will be emancipated by circumstances. While the Czar is an absolute ruler, he is only the crown of an edifice of absolutism. The real oppressors of the Russian people are the great land owners. Their power will not extend to Siberia. Besides this we may look for a peaceful invasion of Russia by the ubiquitous Anglo-Saxon, and absolutism cannot flourish where his influence extends.

ROCK BAY BRIDGE.

The Times was incorrect in conveying the impression that Rock Bay bridge has been closed to traffic. The facts of the case are that Mr. Goward, the Victoria manager of the Tramway Company was notified by the Mayor on the 6th inst. that the time had expired within which, according to the report of the City Engineer, the bridge would be safe for tramway traffic. Mr. Goward asked if the time could not be extended, but the Mayor very properly replied that he had no authority to extend it beyond the limit fixed by the engineer, and

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A MATTER. Mr. Ward... Figures in... Where British Colonists Put... The conclusions... as a result... into the subject... and means subscrib... Ward, who recently... in the hope of secur... vices that the abse... pilotage would oper... to British Columbia... and he will again... some facts and fig... question are it fi... the board of trade... "It would be inte... would show the p... son, required to be p... at Port Angeles to... Blakeley, for exampl... calling in... on her way to... another representat... of Victoria yesterday... Ward will not forget... sel on the American... pay tonnage tax—no... American shipping... goes—which about... obligation." Mr. Ward is quite... ed, but as to the... and emphatically de... any conspicuous part... the reason that the... of British Columbia i... olized by vessels fly... Stripes and an even... of British bottoms a... lumber trade of Pug... contrate the truth of... cities the latest in... carrying British Col... eign during the past... ported in the latest... sial News. By way... may be said that... under the head of... includes 13 Chilean... Norwegian, 2 Italian... 1 Peruvian, 1 J... 1 Japanese vessel.

July... August... September... October... November... December... January... February... Total... From this it will... American ships... cent of British Colum... ing trade, while Brit... only about one-tenth... on this side of the... less on Puget Sound... ally operates against... fore adjustment... put down the tonnage... States, applying only... as, as an offset to... this side of the line... every flag are called... As to the comparat... paid on a vessel loadi... or at Moodyville, the... are produced. They... summed or approximat... really paid by an Ame... lumber cargo at Bia... months later, at Mood... It will thus be seen... 1,350 tons, carrying... lumber, saved \$33,500... American port, while... British ship, and paid... six cents, this obligat... amounted to but \$81... a blanket of \$255.50 in... Blakeley. Of course... time shippers on this... allowed 1s. 3d. on the... cargo in consequence... which should have tot... \$345. And but for the... ship in question could... been loaded at Moody... Nor is it to be anti... prestige now enjoyed... vessels in the trade w... them, no British vess... ber while wheat char... tained, and the Ameri... ports out and being su... for the lumber trade... is but one British vess... in British Columbia... of British ships are... lumber, this fact is... collapse of the wheat... not likely long to contin... The foreign lumber tra... Northwest may be su... monopolized by the Am... its establishment, and... they will be driven out... Nor is it in the direct... age that the Puget Sou... have the advantage... Columbia competitors... compulsory pilotage na... proportion of incoming... Angeles or Port Tow... to the Royal Roads, B... toria, and through the... of their business the... enabled to outfit ship... ly; while labor, follow... ance of ships, goes al... to await the advent... that when ships are ne... British Columbia per... crews insufficient, as i... it is necessary to send... end or Port Angeles fo... fares and incidental ex... another item of their... vineal interests. Still another great dis... British Columbia lumbe... exporters in their com... Americans in the busi...