The Colonist.

MONDAY, APRIL 4, 1898.

A WAGON ROAD TO LAKE TESLIN.

No matter whether a railway is or is not built from Glenora to Teslin Lake, a wagon road is needed and its construction ought to be provided for at once. There has already been unfortunate delay. The lumber for bridges and corduroying ought to have been got out during the winter. It is not too late now, if matters are gone into with a rush, to get the work ready for summer travel, but no time ought to be lost. There are plenty of men up the Stikine, whose service can be obtained for work of this kind during the next two months, and if word were sent up before the ice goes out to engage them, two or three weeks can be saved. If the Dominion government intends taking action in this direction, word ought to be sent out without an hour's delay. We assume that the provincial government is prepared to ask the legislature to do whatever would be the proper share of the province towards such an undertaking.

We repeat that the construction of the railway will not alter in the least the necessity for the wagon road. Work ought to be done immediately upon the latter so that it will be available for freighters while the railway is building and serve as an alternative means of reaching the lake after the railway is in operation.

We await with great interest, but no more so than every business man in the community, to learn what will be done. A decision is of the utmost importance to the province. The action of the Senate led to the interruption of many large business transactions that were in progress. If there is much more delay the loss to the community will be great. The suspense is more harmful than an adverse decision. If people knew what to expect they could shape their affairs accordingly, but as matters stand, they do not know which way to turn. We tell those in authority that the prospect of Mr. Corbin's road tapping the trade of the province from the south and of the trade which should come from the north being threatened with permanent diversion to United States cities is filling our people with a feeling very much akin to despair.

THE APPEAL OF THE QUEEN.

There is something inexpressibly pathetic in the appeal of the Queen of Spain to Queen Victoria. Queen Christina occupies the throne only as regent during the minority of her son, who is yet a little lad. Alfonso XIII. was born a king. His birth occurred after the death of his father, who died November 25, 1885, and whom his five-year old sister succeeded. She was Queen until May 17, 1886, when her brother was born. The queen mother has since held power and her greatest care seems to have been to hand over the sceptre to her son. Writing to her uncle, the Emperor of Austria, a few days ago, she begged him to do what he could to enable her to save the crown for her boy. If she yielded to the demand of the United States revolt would drive the dynasty from the throne. If she refused and defeat followed war, the same result seemed inevitable. But there is nothing much that the Emperor of Austria can do in such a crisis. Now we have the appeal to our sovereign. It is not only that of one queen to another but of a mother on behalf of her son, for whom we may naturally suppose she holds the same affection as any other mother feels for her children. The case has gone beyond the scope of personal sympathy. Whatever her gracious majesty might personally wish to do to alleviate the trouble of the woman who asks her aid, the answer to the question must be given according to the wish of the British people, and this is unmistakably against an attempt to save Spain from the consequence of her misgovernment of Cuba.

Now that the crisis is at hand, it is worth while remembering that the horrors of Spanish misrule in Cuba have been such as would have called for the intervention of foreign powers if anything like them had occurred in any part of Europe. It is absolutely inconceivable that if a province of Spain had been in arms for several years against the crown and such scenes had been enacted there as have taken place in Cuba, the other powers would not have intervened. They did so in Crete with less provocation than has been given in Cuba. It would be foreign to all the instincts of the British people for them to lend their sympathy not to say their active aid, to a nation that had shown itself so absolutely unfit to govern a dependency as Spain has shown herself in regard to Cuba. There is no use in asking who was right and who was wrong at the beginning of the revolt. Both are in the wrong now and a condition exists which it would be morally wrong to allow to continue. It is clearly the duty of the United States to stop the horrors being constantly enacted. It is true that the condition exacted is a hard one, namely, Cuban independence; but when we reflect that for fifteen years out of twenty-five Cuba has been in armed revolt and that only a semblance of peace was maintained during the rest of the period by the most appalling execution of prisoners taken in rebellion, we cannot say that the condition ought not to be insisted upon. There is no guarantee which Spain can possibly give that, if peace were made without independence, in a few years things would not be as bad as they are now.

It is undoubtedly true that none of the Spanish American peoples, except those of Mexico, have shown themselves fit for self-government and it is altogether likely that the Cubans will not prove much of an exception to the rule; but nothing can be worse than the conditions which have now existed for years, and there is a chance for an improvement. If the people cannot govern themselves, some power that knows how to do so will have to take the matter in hand.

The appeal of Christina will be refused. Her pathetic request that the dynasty, of which she is the custodian, shall not be overthrown might in former days have received consideration; but dynasties now have only those rights which they exercise for the public good, and this cannot be said of Spanish rule on Cuba.

AN INDEX OF PROGRESS.

Perhaps nothing better indicates the progress being made in this province than the increase of work done in the Lands and Works department. The Chief Commissioner made a reference to the matter in his speech on supply and through his kindness we are enabled to lay before the public a comparative statement between the years 1887 and 1897. It is as follows:

	1887.	1897.	Inc'se.	Per c.
Pre-emption records	303	462	159	52
Certificates of improvement	73	204	131	179
Do. Purchase	351	977	626	178
Crown grants ..	320	766	446	140
Acreage deed'd.	73,950	609,597	535,647	724
Letters rec'd .	3,079	8,034	4,955	160
Free miners' certificates ..	120	1,206	1,086	900
Field books of survey plotted .	155	894	739	470

The figures are instructive as well as interesting. Thus they show a very substantial gain in the pre-emption records, a great increase in the certificates of improvements and the certificates of purchase, a very substantial increase in the number of crown grants and an enormous gain in the acreage granted. A gain of nine hundred per cent. in the number of free miners' certificates tells its own story. The number of field books of survey plotted exhibits a great growth in this portion of the department's business and explains why the present clerical force is required to keep up with the work of the office. The comparison demonstrates also that the Lands and Works department is certain to become a very much more important branch of the public service than it is at present. It has to deal not only with the roads, bridges, public buildings and a vast variety of other matters coming under the head of public works, but with a domain of imperial magnitude. Sooner or later the work will have to be divided between two responsible ministers. In Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick these departments are kept separate, and in a short time British Columbia will have more business arising out of its public domain than any two of those provinces.

THE PROVINCIAL DEBT.

In his speech on the estimates Mr. R. P. Rithet made a point of very great interest and importance when he said that Canada assumed nearly $63,000,000 indebtedness on account of Ontario and Quebec at the time of union. The point is not affected in any way by the debt assumed by Canada on account of this province. What Mr. Rithet was seeking to show was not that the terms of union were unfair or that the older provinces had received greater consideration than British Columbia, but that the various governments in control of those provinces had felt compelled to incur very large indebtedness for provincial development. It is interesting to note what the debt of the four original provinces was. Ontario and Quebec were down for $62,500,000, Nova Scotia for $8,000,000 and New Brunswick for $7,000,000. These debts were incurred for public works. Take the case of New Brunswick, whose debt is nearest that of British Columbia. New Brunswick has an area of 27,000 square miles and at the time of confederation had a population of about 250,000. Its per capita debt was therefore lighter than ours now is, but when compared to the area of the province, the amount of natural wealth awaiting development, the revenue producing capacity of those works, the revenue-paying ability of the province and the annual production of wealth the indebtedness of the eastern province was far higher than that of British Columbia at present. The point which Mr. Rithet brought out and which we wish to emphasize now is that these older provinces went into debt freely in order that their resources might be opened up, although to do so they were compelled to pay very much higher interest than we do. Referring again to New Brunswick we find that since confederation a very considerable debt has been incurred. We think the amount is above $3,000,000. This has been borrowed for public works including the subsidizing of railways.

It is not necessary to tell any one who is familiar with the eastern provinces, that as compared with British Columbia they are poor in the natural resources. Let it be remembered that British Columbia is greater in area than Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward's Island combined, and is unquestionably richer by nature than they are. It is a vast area which only requires development along the right lines to become one of the most prosperous regions in the world. It is greater than they are in its mineral wealth, greater in its wealth of timber, lieve will be found to be greater in its extent of agricultural lands. Its fisheries are at least equal to theirs. Its commercial future, owing to its position on the shore of the Pacific Ocean, is fully as promising as theirs, if not more so. Yet including what was assumed at the time of confederation and what has been incurred since, those provinces have borrowed and expended on public works upwards of $60,000,000, or ten times what this province has borrowed for the same purpose. If we look elsewhere for another comparison we will find that the province of West Australia, with a population of only 150,000, and resources not by any means equal to ours, has borrowed for public works the sum of $20,000,000. These things show that those who clamor about the province being heavily in debt either are ignorant of what has been done elsewhere or they purposely shut their eyes to the facts in order that they may be able to make a political point against their opponents. We do not wish to do them the injustice of suggesting that they have no faith in the province and desire to warn people against having anything to do with it.

We believe the people of British Columbia expect the government of the day to pursue a very liberal policy of expenditure along such lines as are necessary to enable immigrants to utilize the country's great resources and keep as much as possible of it at home. We believe they would turn out of power a government which would stand supinely by and permit the great opportunity of the present hour to pass unimproved because it is necessary to borrow money in order to take advantage of it. A cry has gone up throughout the province for an aggressive policy. The opposition press, in utter disregard of the recent political history of the province, have asserted time and time again that the present government is a do-nothing government; yet the moment a proposition is made to borrow any money to do something with, a cry goes up that the government is recklessly extravagant, that it is plunging the province into debt, that it is seeking to corrupt the people with public money. We would li ke these opposition critics to tell us, if they know themselves, how the province can be developed without the expenditure of money; we would like them to tell us how the needed money can be got ex- with public money. We would like these to say where they think it ought to be laid out, so that no suspicion can be raised in the mind of an unreasonable man that somebody is going to be induced to vote for the government candidates because of it.

The public of British Columbia expect that large sums will be spent on public works, that needed railways will receive assistance, that needed highways and bridges will be constructed, that necessary public buildings will be erected, and it would be senseless to deny that for this purpose it will be imperative to send abroad for the money, for the simple reason that it would be useless to expect to raise it by taxation. If we do not borrow we cannot hope to progress, and it ought to be a matter of profound gratification, as indeed we know it is, to the great majority of the voters that our finances have been so handled that the requisite money can be got in the best market in the world on terms equal to those obtainable by almost any other country. A public debt for productive public works is not a burden, but a benefit; and we think it can be claimed with the fullest justice that the very much greater part of the indebtedness of this province is for works that have contributed to the public revenue and will continue to increase the existing sources of income. The exception is, of course, what has been laid out on public buildings. It is unwise to object to our present indebtedness, because if the province grows, as we all expect it will in population and wealth, the debt will be very much greater.

CLEOPATRA.

We shall never know what the real Cleopatra was like. That she was a woman of extraordinary personal charms seems to be unquestionable. That she was a woman of brilliant attainments may be inferred from the fact that she was said to be able to converse freely in seven languages. That she was possessed of great talents may be inferred from the ascendancy over Caesar and Antony. She came of a family which produced many great men. She was a daughter of the Ptolmeys, a family, which originating in Greece, ruled Egypt for three centuries. The splendor of their reigns was remarkable and some of the sovereigns of the name gained great renown by their literary and scientific attainments. Cleopatra was born in 69 B. C. and died in 30 B. C., having been therefore only 39 years old at the time the little serpent ended her short but meteoric career. When eighteen years of age she ascended the throne of Egypt conjointly with her brother. The latter dispossessed her, whereupon Caesar came to her rescue, with the result that she was restored to her place and her brother was driven from the kingdom. Two years later she repaid Caesar for his kindness by going to Rome to live with him. She remained there for two years until immediately after Caesar's death. Of her relations with Antony and her tragic death on being falsely told that he had been slain at Actium it is not necessary to say anything.

Cleopatra is interesting as a type of her sex at the meridian splendor of ancient civilization. In some respects we fall to-day very short of the height attained in Egypt and Rome during the century preceding the beginning of the present era. When Cleopatra visited Antony at Tarsus in 41 B. C., her voyage is said to have been marked by inconceivable magnificence. Ingenuity and wealth exhausted themselves in contributing to the pleasure of those in power in those days. Yet such men as the Ptolmeys and such women as Cleopatra were not mere voluptiaries. The fine arts received their patronage; literature flourished under their influence, what then passed for science was greatly encouraged by them. Among them were great soldiers, great statesmen, men of the broadest ideas. There were philosophers among them, careful students, profound scholars. Yet along with all these admirable traits we find an abandonment to sensual pleasures that is incomprehensible to the people of our own days. We would find ourselves unable to understand how, for example, a European queen could sink to such a level that at the time of a crisis in the affairs of her kingdom she would go to a foreign capital and live as mistress of the sovereign in exchange for his protection against another country, or that the people of either country would tolerate any such conduct on their ruler's part. That Cleopatra could have done this and that Caesar lost no standing by it serves to show upon how very different a plane society was ordered then to what is now. The age was one of intense materialism, against which the teachings of the Neoplatonists in Egypt and of Christ in Palestine were protests. Of this materialism Cleopatra was a splendid representative. For her there was nothing in life comparable to material enjoyment, and when the man of her choice was reported slain, all the greatness and glory of her surroundings, all the traditions of her illustrious race were as nothing. Only in death could she find solace. In her we have the spirit of ancient civilization typified. It was of the earth earthy. It was great in material achievements; it was little in everything which tended to the elevation of man to his true position. We can find in the career of this remarkable woman, if we look closely enough, all that is necessary to account for the fall of the empires of her day and the centuries immediately preceding. They built upon a foundation that was not abiding, because they ignored the divine spark which alone distinguishes mankind from lower creations. We cannot imagine representative men and women of this age recognizing the higher aspect of humanity which the Psalmist had in mind when he uttered that rhapsody beginning:

"When I consider the heavens the work
of thy fingers,
And the moon and the stars which thou
hast ordained,
What is man that thou art mindful of
him."

No such lofty conception entered their minds. Their thoughts were not above the present life; their ideal of existence was to make the most of the passing hour. They said to their souls let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die. Of this class was Cleopatra, with all her beauty, all her accomplishments, all her intelligence, all her power as a queen. The civilization which she represented did not die with her, but lingered on for some centuries, but it had lost its vital force and not even the glorious galaxy of thinkers beginning with Philo Judaeus and ending with Hypatia could save it from extinction.

We are not impressed with the plan proposed by Hon. Mr. Blair in the railway committee to prevent Mr. Corbin's proposed road from hauling British Columbian ores to the United States smelters. The government is to have power given it, so the minister suggests to fix the freight rates on ore. If it is intended to make the rate high enough to prevent exportation, it would seem to be a wiser plan to put on an export duty at once. Let us suppose that the Corbin charter goes through and Mr. Blair, as minister of railways, proceeds to order that the freight on ore shall be so high that it will not pay owners to export it over the new road. Is it not altogether probable that a cry would at once go up that this was discrimination against a particular locality? Does he propose to provide that freights should also be fixed so high that no ore should be hauled to the Northport smelter or over the Canadian Pacific to foreign smelters, or is the proposed restriction to apply only to the Boundary Creek country? The extremely fragmentary report of what the minister said prevents us forming a very definite idea of his proposed plan; but as it looks at present it seems like a very unsatisfactory arrangement. If mining will stand the imposition of a freight rate that will prohibit the exportation of ore, it will stand an export duty on the ore, and the latter would, we submit, be the more satisfactory and by far the safer plan to adopt.

There is a decided falling off in the tide of travel northward, but those who claim to be in touch with eastern centres say it is only temporary. Several reasons are given for the drop. The bad reports sent out in regard to all the avenues of entrance into the country, the stories of sickness in Lynn Canal towns, the excitement over the war prospect, the fact that it has been generally understood that April was a bad month to go north are claimed to afford the explanation why the number of Yukon pilgrims is so very much less now than it was a couple of weeks ago. The explanations seem sufficient.

War between the United States and Spain seems inevitable now, and we cannot see how twenty-four hours can pass without the rupture being complete. It has been evident for a day or two that Spain could not accept what was practically an ultimatum from Washington. In the present state of public opinion in the United States it would be simply useless for the President to attempt to discover a peaceful way out of the present entanglement. Congress would not listen to him for a moment.

If the Dominion government wishes to do the right thing at the right time, let it provide at once for the construction of a railway from Kitimat Arm to Teslin Lake and begin work at Glenora and the head of the Arm simultaneously. We do not care how the work is done, so that it is done as soon as possible and not too extravagantly.

Awarded
Highest Honors—World's Fair,
DR.
PRICE'S
CREAM
BAKING
POWDER
MOST PERFECT MADE.
A pure Grape Cream of Tartar Powder. Free from Ammonia, Alum or any other adulterant.
40 YEARS THE STANDARD.

COLUMBIA FLOURING MILLS CO.
Enderby and Vernon.
Brands
HUNGARIAN, PREMIER, SUPERFINE AND *** SPECIAL
R. P. RITHET & CO., Victoria
Agents.

Massey-Harris Bicycles
1898 MODELS
HAVE ARRIVED
Catalogue Free. Inspect the Phillips Brake
ONE OR TWO 1897 MODELS LEFT.
E. G. PRIOR & CO., Ltd. Lty.
Hardware, Agricultural Implements.
Miners Supplies, Etc.
Corner Government and Johnson Streets

NEW SPRING GOODS
Boys' 3-Piece Suits in sizes from 20 to 26; the very latest designs.
Boys' Blue Serge Knickers at 65c., 75c. and 85c.; sizes 22 to 32, well lined and trimmed.
Boys' long Stockings, extra heavy; fit boys from 8 to 15 years; 25 cents per pair.
Men's Summer Suits. in tweeds and serges; good suits for $8.00.
Men's Summer Overcoats, box back; the very latest, $10.50 and $12.00.
Great value in Underwear. We sell an all wool article, double breast and double back for $1.25 or $2.50 for the suit. Worth $3.00.
Gilmore & McCandless,
35 and 37 JOHNSON STREET

The Senate . . .
Should attend Kindergarten and study up the great Northwest. 'Twas ever thus. Victoria interests count for nothing. Railroad or no Railroad we are offering this week
Large Navel Oranges, . . 25c. dozen
Fresh Eggs, ... 20c. dozen
Prunes, 3 lbs. for . . . . . 25c.
Morgan's Eastern Oysters, always reliable.
Use Dixi Hams and Bacon.
DIXI H. ROSS & CO.

CONDITIONS AT SKAGWAY.

A British Columbian States for His Friends' Benefit the Exact State of Affairs.

Skagway, March 15.—Having a few minutes at my disposal I wish to let those who may be following know the true condition of affairs obtaining here as I am sure that many, like myself, will be somewhat surprised upon arriving.

The first obstacle one meets is the charge for landing which at the wharf when we were landed amounted to the modest sum of 15 cents per package on the freight and 25 cents per package on my baggage.

Your next obstacle is to pass the U.S. customs, to do which you are forced to employ a broker to make out your papers and secure your bond and convoy. The amount of your bond is as follows: The invoice is doubled and 30 per cent. duty added. The broker's charge is 2½ per cent. of the amount of your bond, which, with my modest outfit of some two tons amounted to the "merely nominal sum" of $25. Then you must have a convoy or United States inspector of customs to accompany you to the summit whose charge is $6 per diem. If you have occasion to hire an express you are charged $1.50 and other things in proportion. Beds and meals may be obtained for 25 cents each; beer 12½ cents a glass or 25 cents per quart.

Packing to Bennett is now quoted at 15 cents per pound, and is daily becoming higher. Two weeks ago you could have the same work done for 9 cents, but the roads are repidly becoming worse and the talk is that 25 cents and 30 cents will be asked before a month has passed. The Dyea trail is said to be so blocked at Sheep Camp that goods already there will not be moved before July. Altogether the Skagway trail seems to be the best entrance.

Of our trip up on the C.P.N. boat Tees I cannot speak too highly. The officers and men were always courteous and obliging and everything possible was done to make us comfortable; and our speedy trips speaks for the efficiency of her navigators.

If these few comments should meet the eye of any intending pilgrim I trust he will take them to himself because this is exactly what he will find no matter what he may be told. Government officials move slowly and by next fall some change may be made, but this letter tells exactly what to expect now.

The weather here is fine, windy but bracing and one must not expose one's self; but the reports of epidemic are simply untrue in every particular.

I hope to write again from Bennett and perhaps be able to give some other information relative to this trip that would be of interest to some of your readers.

A. H. HAWKINS.

"BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION ACT."

The Registrar-General desires to call the attention of the Public to the following requirements of the Revised Act:

(1.) The Act now applies to all persons within the Province, Indians, Chinese and Japanese included.

(2.) DEATHS. The Public are reminded that every householder is bound, under Penalty of $25 and upwards, to report to the District Registrar every death occurring in his house. The Undertaker in charge may, if he has a personal knowledge of the facts, make the registration as hitherto, but the householder is liable if it be not done.

(3.) CLERGYMEN, UNDERTAKERS and others are desired to bear in mind that no person can take any part in burying a dead body, under a Penalty of $25 and upwards, without a certificate of the due registration of the death, unless in the belief that it is impossible to register the death, or, if registered, to obtain the certificate; and that in such case it is their duty, under a like Penalty, themselves to register the death within seven days in the usual form.

(4.) CORONERS are requested to register all deaths on which they hold inquests.

(5.) MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS are reminded that the signed certificate of cause of death must be delivered or posted by them within 48 hours of notice of decease, instead of within 30 days as hitherto, and must be forwarded to the District Registrar of the District in which the person died, and not, as heretofore, that in which the Practitioner resides.

(6.) MARRIAGES. Ministers, and other persons authorized to solemnize marriages must now send in quarterly returns of marriages solemnized by them. Such returns must be forwarded to the District Registrar within 15 days after the end of each three months. The old forms may be used, if it be remembered to insert, under "Remarks" the Place of Celebration, and whether church or residence.