

REPUDIATION.

The cancelling of the subsidy to the Vancouver, Victoria & Eastern Railway will be a great disappointment to the residents of the Coast. People were looking forward for a large increase of trade with the interior of the Province, more particularly with the Boundary Creek district. The reasons assigned for such action by the Government are hardly tenable. The objections of the introducer, the Attorney-General, were not sufficient to warrant the withdrawal of the subsidy. His attack on the promoters was unbecoming a man in his position. His sole charge was that the promoters were out to make some money out of the project! It is well known that they will hardly realize their expenditure in putting the scheme on the basis which it has arrived at. It is generally conceded that this argument was only put forward to excuse the present Government's action and to cover up a deal which the Minister of Finance and the Attorney-General had in their minds, because it was stated that they would have the matter to deal with and the present contractors of the road might have a chance to arrange with them for the building of the road. After the venom shown toward this Company by the Finance Minister and the Attorney-General the present Company need not expect consideration at their hands. The result of the vote shows how servile a following the present Government has in the House. A large number of the constituencies represented by these men would be largely benefited by such a line. Notwithstanding this fact all the representatives from the Lower Fraser, including the cities of Vancouver and New Westminster, with one exception, that of Mr. McBride, the member from Dewdney, voted for the cancellation of the subsidy. It is said the chief objection Messrs. Cotton and Martin had against the Vancouver, Victoria & Eastern Railway was that the act and agreement with that Company provided for a daily ferry between Point Roberts and Vancouver Island. They claimed that this was a useless expense—not that it was to cost the Province any more, for the aid granted to the railway was for so much a mile, and the Company would necessarily have to bear this outlay and not the Province. The ferry was only part of the agreement insisted on by the representatives of Victoria at the last session. But Attorney-General Martin and Finance Minister Cotton have no love for the City of Victoria, so an objection of this character, without reason or good sense, is quite enough for them to advance, especially when any advantage to the city is mooted or provided for. But the Government has plainly adopted a policy of repudiation. In the past we have looked upon the acts of former governments as binding, but it seems that the Martin-Semlin Government have no consideration for precedent or principle.

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