

The Colonist.

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THE FOREST ACT

Mr. Ross, Minister of Lands, introduced in the Legislature yesterday what is to be known as the "Forest Act," being the measure dealing with timber prepared in response to the recommendations of the Commission on Forestry. It is a Bill of 144 sections, and, as far as can be judged from such examination as we have been able to make, seems to be an exceedingly comprehensive and useful measure.

The Bill proposes to create what is to be known as the Forest Branch of the Department of Lands, to be presided over by a Chief Forester, with such assistants as he may require, and the following subjects will be within the management of the branch:

- (a) All the rights, properties, interests, claims and demands of the crown in right of the province of British Columbia in forests, timber lands and timber.
- (b) All revenues and moneys of the crown in right of the province of British Columbia arising from forestry, timber lands, timber, trees and products of the forest.
- (c) Conservation of existing forests.
- (d) Reforestation.
- (e) Prevention of forest fires.
- (f) Sales and dispositions of, and tenancies of, timber lands, or timber, or trees, or forest products belonging to the crown in right of the province of British Columbia.
- (g) Cutting, classifying, measuring, manufacturing, branding and exporting of trees, logs, timber and products of the forest; and
- (h) Statutes, rules and regulations relating to the regulation of forestry and the protection of forests.

A Provincial Forest Board is provided for, to consist of six members, whose duty it shall be to ensure the carrying out of the provisions of the Act, and for that purpose it is given power to summon witnesses and take all necessary steps to reach conclusions of fact.

After the Bill becomes law no new licence to cut timber on crown lands shall be granted except after competition, and provisions for the cruising and classification of timber lands by the department. An upset price is to be set upon the timber, and, in addition to whatever sum may be bid for the licence, the licensee must pay rental and royalty. Special provisions are made as to pulp licences. Forest reserves and their management are provided for.

Timber leases now outstanding are made renewable for successive periods of twenty-one years, subject to rents and royalties, and other conditions as may be in force at the time of the renewal. Of timber licences some are renewable for sixteen years, some for twenty-one years, while those taken out under the 1910 act are renewable in perpetuity, or as long as there is any timber to be cut on the ground covered by them; but there are provisions as to land near a city covered by licence or any land under licence that may be needed for agricultural purposes. Royalties and rentals payable under licences are subject to change from time to time by order-in-council.

The Act provides for the use or manufacture in the province of all lumber cut on crown lands or on lands that have been crown-granted since 1906 or may hereafter be crown-granted, but there is a provision under the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council permitting the export of the smaller description of timber. This is doubtless intended to prevent waste through the cutting of large timber.

The provisions for the prevention of damage to forests through fire seem to be very complete and to have been drawn with great care, and a Forest Protection Fund is to be created, to which all holders of timber lands, by whatever title they may be held, are required to contribute, the province to contribute an equal sum.

We look upon the bill as a whole as an exceedingly commendable and thorough attempt on the part of the Minister to deal with a matter of very great present, and undoubtedly greater future, importance.

HOME RULE ALL ROUND

"Home Rule All Round," as the phrase is, or in other words the federation of the United Kingdom, is the subject of a circular letter sent us by the Scottish National Committee. The letter was written by Mr. Moreton Frewen, whose name will not be unfamiliar to Colonist readers. This method of solving the problems presenting by the demands of Ireland, and what is claimed to be a parliamentary breakdown at Westminster has been already referred to in these columns. Indeed Earl Grey did us the honor some years ago to ask us to bring the matter forward for the consideration of Canadian readers. His position as Governor-General made it impossible for him to identify himself personally with the movement at that time. Earl Grey was convinced by his experience in Canada that the federal

system was a complete success, a view from which we do not imagine he will be driven because of the absurd statements of Sir Max Aitken. Whether or not conditions in the United Kingdom are such as to justify the opinion that a federation between the three kingdoms, with perhaps Wales as a fourth member of the group, will afford the best solution of the difficulties that confront the nation is a matter upon which we feel unable to express an opinion; but we are able to say that, if the experience of Canada counts for anything at all, the federal plan has very great outstanding merits. We are well within bounds when we add that without the federal system the government of Canada would be next to impossible; that deadlocks would occur, and that the mass of detail, that would have to be dealt with by Parliament, would be so enormous as to produce complete paralysis. That readers may be able to appreciate the proposed federal movement and estimate to some extent its prospect of success, we quote a portion of Mr. Frewen's letter. He says:

I violate no confidence when I say that your distinguished countryman, Lord Minto, Governor-General in Canada, Victoria but the other day in India, is with us Federalists whole heartedly. To Lord Grey, who we fully won the confidence and affection of Canada I attribute the new Federal movement in which we are engaged. Lord Grey for the past three years has urged this solution for Irish, for Scottish, and for English grievances, and we regard Lord Grey and no other as our leader in this cause. Lord Dudley, while Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in a Tory administration, left no stone unturned to discover the foundations of Irish unrest. He next went to Australia as its Governor-General, and has come home but a few weeks ago convinced that the application of some such Federal system as he studied in Australia is essential here if we are to avoid a great national disaster. I could, were it necessary, adduce other leaders of our people, but it is not desirable at this time. In Ireland, as you are aware, we have in Lord Dunraven, Mr. William O'Brien, and Mr. T. M. Healy a nucleus of intellect, character, and experience which in the stormy times at hand there will be a big muster of Lincoln's "plain people." I believe that in those days of fraught with danger to the Empire itself, Scotland may be destined to play the greatest part of all. What is required is more philosophy and less passion; and the Scottish Colony we call Ulster may consent to come into Council with Scotland at a time when in Ireland itself, and not in Ulster only but in all the four provinces, Home Rule is under discussion, to an accompaniment of bottle-glass, and paving stones.

OLD AGE PENSIONS

The proposal that a committee of the House of Commons shall be appointed to consider the question of old age pensions will evoke some differences of opinion. The suggestion that this plan shall be adopted in Canada comes as a surprise, for not many persons had thought it necessary. Nevertheless, a case favorable to it may be made out. At first sight one might think there is something in the objection that such pensions might be looked upon as something in the nature of a reflection upon the much-talked-of prosperity of the country; but we do not feel very sure about that. If the principle involved in old age pensions is sound, the fact that a country is in the hey-day of prosperity is no reason why it should not be adopted. If it is unsound, it ought not to be adopted under any circumstances. No one would regard it as an objectionable advertisement if it could be announced that every working-man in Canada would be able to secure steady employment and save enough money to provide himself with an annuity in his old age.

There are certain practical difficulties in the way of the successful operation of such a plan in Canada, which will have to be overcome before it could be accepted. To our present way of thinking, these difficulties seem very serious, but possibly the proposed committee may be able to show that they do not actually exist, or that they may easily be surmounted, or that they are more than counterbalanced by advantages. There is something in favor of the argument that the time to inaugurate such a plan is when the population is relatively small and the country is in the enjoyment of great prosperity.

A RAILWAY GRIDIRON

The province of New Brunswick is a nearly square body of land with an average length of about 200 miles, and an average breadth of 150. Its area is a little over 27,000 square miles. If a line is drawn across the map of the province from east to west and about midway between its northern and southern limits, it will cross the Intercolonial railway, the National Trans-Continental, one section of the Canadian Pacific, the route of the St. John Valley line to be constructed immediately, and another section of the Canadian Pacific. It will also cross the Fredericton branch of the Intercolonial, but that will be included among the transverse lines to be hereafter mentioned. We have thus four existing, and one proposed longitudinal railways in a distance of 150 miles. Two of these, the first mentioned section of the C. P. R., and the proposed St. John Valley line do not extend through the whole length of the province. Beginning at the south, the province is crossed from west to east by the following railways, extending in each

case only part of the distance across. The Grand Southern near the Bay of Fundy coast extending from the western boundary to St. John; the C. P. R. from the western boundary to St. John; the St. John division of the Intercolonial extending from St. John to Shediac; the Fredericton branch of the Intercolonial extending from Fredericton to Chatham; the Central extending from a point on the St. John division of the Intercolonial to a point near the centre of the province. A railway is in construction from Grand Falls on the St. John river to Dalhousie on the Bay Chaleur. Of branch lines the number is almost legion. In all there are somewhere in the neighborhood 2,000 miles of railway in this province or about 1 mile for every 14 square miles of territory.

PROVINCIAL SUBSIDIES

The increases in the provincial subsidies from the Dominion in consequence of the recent census amount in the aggregate to \$1,995,173. All the provinces received increases except Prince Edward's Island. The smallest increase is in the case of New Brunswick; the longest is in the case of Saskatchewan. As the law at present stands there will be no further increases in the subsidies for ten years, except in the case of the Prairie Province, where there is an increase every five years. We submit that British Columbia is entitled to as favorable treatment as they receive. Details of the subsidies are as follows:

Province	Total Subsidy	Increase
Ontario	\$2,286,420	\$207,657
Quebec	1,971,704	288,325
New Scotia	638,667	26,207
New Brunswick	637,375	16,614
British Columbia	713,780	191,704
Prince Edward Isl.	281,831
Alberta	1,200,722	87,650
Saskatchewan	1,548,138	318,573

The great cotton lock-out has been amicably settled. This will give profound satisfaction all over the United Kingdom.

They are having a nice little war down in Ecuador. It has been said that in South American republics is an absolutism tempered by revolution.

The King and Queen are to visit Australia in 1915. His Majesty has adopted a policy that will send his name down in history as "George the Empire King."

Mr. H. J. Crowe, a prominent Newfoundland lumberman, wants the British Empire and the United States to form a commercial pact against all the world, and especially against Germany and Japan. What about China? The Yellow Peril will loom very large industrially within a few years after the Chinese have settled their political differences.

We are gravely assured that the rapid influx of people into British Columbia is a very lame excuse for the failure of the farmers to overtake the demand for produce. In view of this we suggest for consideration the propriety of compelling people to do away with one meal a day. If the farmers cannot produce as much as the people eat, there seems to be no remedy except to make the people eat less.

While the resolution passed by the Rural Deans of Victoria in reference to labor problems is not very specific, and it could not very well be more so than it is, we welcome it as an indication of a growing interest in one of the greatest practical questions of the hour by one of the most important religious organizations in the community. Great good must result from sympathetic relations between the churches and the labor organizations and workmen generally.

The Colonist has not the least hesitation in admitting that it hesitates about pronouncing for or against any new political proposition until it knows what can be said for or against it. It pursued this course when Sir Wilfrid Laurier was in power, and it does not propose to change it now that Mr. Borden is prime minister. It also regards its duty in connection with all proposals in legislation to be to inform its readers as to the facts rather than thrust hastily formed opinions upon them.

Mr. E. W. Thomson, the well-known Ottawa correspondent of the Boston Transcript, says it is probable that Sir Wilfrid Laurier will lead the Liberal party at the next federal election. Sir Wilfrid's years, about which he often speaks, sit lightly upon him, but he is only seventy, and that is not old for a man who is really fit. Lord Palmerston was 75 when he formed his last cabinet, and he died in harness at 81. There is no reason in sight why Sir Wilfrid should not lead His Majesty's Loyal Opposition for the next ten years if he feels like doing so.

Nanaimo poultrymen have organized an egg collecting agency for the co-operative marketing of their products. J. Kerline and James Johnson are dead as the result of their handcar being struck by a train in the vicinity of the C. P. R. tunnel at Paulsen. During a visit to his old congregation at Maple Ridge, Rev. W. Govier was presented with a handsome gold watch as a token of remembrance. The Cranbrook Fish and Game Association has recommended that the act be amended so that the deer season shall open annually with September and close on November 29.

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TALES OF

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