

AFRAID OF DISSOLUTION.

"We believe that before the House meets a sufficient number of members will have declared themselves opposed to the government to give the opposition a sufficient majority on a want of confidence to demonstrate that a dissolution is not necessary."

The above sentence is from the Colonist, which has repeatedly declared that Mr. Turner can no longer be considered a factor in British Columbia public affairs, and where the leader is there must his late colleagues in the cabinet also be. In an interview Mr. Macpherson told the Colonist representative that he would not vote with the government if they brought in certain legislation that he was informed they were going to bring in, but he made it quite clear that he was still a supporter of the government and an uncompromising opponent of the Turners, merely reserving to himself, as all representatives do, his right of private judgment in regard to measures which more immediately affect his constituents. In the face of this interview the Colonist once more reiterates the opinion that the opposition, in the improbable event of the government being defeated, could gather support enough without a dissolution to form a government and carry on the affairs of the country. In that case Turner, the impossible, would once more be the ruler and it would not be necessary to call on the unknown strong man to form a "business" administration. Among the chief supporters of this great aggression would be Mr. Joseph Martin and Mr. D. W. Higgins, as the Colonist, which in political affairs can be depended on to adhere very strictly to the truth, says the former is only waiting an opportunity to deal Mr. Semlin's government a blow in a vital spot, while the latter has publicly announced, on what appears to be very inadequate grounds, that he will oppose the Semlin administration. The spectacle of Mr. Martin supporting a Turner administration's acts would create a political convulsion; and if Mr. Higgins, after leaving the Speaker's chair to denounce the policy of his old-time friends, and afterwards successfully appealing to the electors of Esquimalt for support against a candidate of that party, once more takes his seat with the condemned of the people, then we will have an example of the extraordinary dexterity of a politician's mind in adapting itself to new conditions.

The real situation seems to be that the labor representatives in the Legislature are inclined to a certain extent to support Mr. Martin, while not withdrawing their support from the government; therefore if the opposition and the labor men led by Mr. Martin should by any combination of circumstances be found voting together, Mr. Semlin might find himself in a minority, and a dissolution would surely follow. This is not likely to occur, but it is a possibility, whereas the idea of Mr. Martin or Mr. Macpherson supporting a Turner administration is absurd. The opposition are welcome to all the comfort they can extract from the interview with Mr. Macpherson, which is printed in to-day's Times. It does not contain one remark inconsistent with the position of a supporter of the government.

"MENDACIOUS LIARS."

We print Mr. Macpherson's letter in reply to the Colonist's interview and the affidavit of the interviewee; they are worth giving as contributions to the current political literature and not because they prove very much on either side. The report of Mr. Macpherson's interview, in our opinion, might be permitted to stand as the views of that gentleman in so far as at least as his attitude towards the government was referred to therein, and that is all that we are concerned with. The Colonist correspondent no doubt omitted a great deal that was said, and gave a twist to what he published which Mr. Macpherson will probably consider unfair—it may perhaps even justify the use of the term "mendacious liar" which the member for Vancouver freely applies to the writer of the "interview." But, as we have already pointed out, very few words, if any, were placed in Mr. Macpherson's mouth to which the members of the government could object, and very little was reported to have been said that might not be said by any independent government supporter. The fact is the Colonist, like a drowning man catching at a straw, seized hold of a few frank statements by a loyal supporter of the government, who spoke of what he might do if the government did something of which he did not approve, to sustain the untenable claim that the government was in a minority in the House. It was very probably the use that was made of his words rather than the manner in which they were reported to which Mr. Macpherson objects most strongly. The little incident, disgraceful though it be, has done some good; it has shown the public how tricky and mendacious are the methods of the opposition in their desperate efforts to get back to power again.

The Colonist has said that it would be impossible to restore the Turner regime. Here are its exact words: "There is a general consensus of opinion that a new departure in British Columbia politics is much to be desired. A proposal to restore the Turner regime would not meet with a favorable response from the people, Mr. Turner and his associates being regarded as representing conditions that existed in British Columbia before recent progress so completely altered the position of the province." Now, what we would particularly like to have our contemporary explain is this:

How would it be possible to avoid restoring the Turner regime if the Semlin government were defeated and a new administration were formed from the members now in opposition? The Colonist claims this could be done without dissolving the House. What sort of a government would it be without Turners in it, or at least enough of them to give it a distinct flavor of Turnerism?

Kamloops politicians have issued invitations to a Turnerite convention to be held at that place about the middle of September.

Will Mr. Turner be invited to attend the proposed convention and assist at his own deposition?

PACKING FRUIT.

To the Editor: I have visited the more important points between Calgary and Winnipeg in the interest of the fruit growers of British Columbia and find that our fruit would be very much more in demand if the people could be assured that it would arrive in good condition. Every one says it is badly packed. The cry is the same from the Rocky mountains to Winnipeg.

I have ascertained that this fault will be remedied in future and I doubt not if our fruit growers only take pains that the results will be most satisfactory. At present California fruit is getting scarce and consequently more expensive and here in very indifferent condition, also plums on the market, one firm alone has disposed of thirty carloads from Walla Walla last year. Now they have advised that the supply is not possibly excessive and probably not that large.

There is quite an amount of Ontario plums on the market here, but like ourselves the Ontario people have a great deal to learn as regards packing, and the consequence is that their fruit arrives here in very indifferent condition, also the quality of their fruit is not up to the standard of ours, either in appearance or flavor. The fruit growers of British Columbia can capture the market here and establish themselves on the prairies if they look to their packing and the supply holds out. If they only knew how much depends on their efforts they would amend their ways.

By giving this space in your valuable paper you will much oblige.

HOSPITAL BUSINESS.

One of the pleasant features of last night's meeting of the board of directors of the Provincial Royal Jubilee Hospital, was the return to his seat of Mr. L. Braverman, who reached home on Saturday last from a visit of several weeks' duration to the Fatherland. His fellow directors accorded Mr. Braverman a very hearty welcome and on his part the newly returned director entertained the early arrivals at the meeting with an interesting description of the most striking features of his trip. The contrasts afforded by what he had seen in Eastern British Canada years ago and what he saw on this trip and the almost incredible differences between the prices of merchandise in Victoria and Hamburg, involving an almost stupendous contrast in wages, provided excellent matter for conversation until a quorum was obtained.

President H. Dallas Helmenck took the chair a very few minutes after the usual time of commencement, there being present: Directors, Wilson, Crisp, Braverman, Flumerfelt, Forman, Davy, Drury, Holland and Lewis, and Secretary Elworthy.

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read the secretary read communications as follows: From Dr. Haslam, asking for a week's leave of absence from August 30th, to complete his vacation, Dr. Robertson acting as his locum tenens. The request was granted. The minutes of the meeting also notified the board that he had succeeded in obtaining a successor to Mr. McPherson, the male nurse, who has resigned his position, and the appointment of Mr. Minor, the new nurse, was confirmed. Mr. McPherson intends going to the Philippines and it was decided to give him a testimonial of recommendation. The monthly pay roll amounting to \$329 was passed for payment.

The tax collector having sent in his usual blue paper requesting payment it was suggested that the city might be willing to donate to the hospital a amount of the taxes, and Mr. Lewis moved and was decided that a committee consisting of Directors Wilson and Flumerfelt, and Mr. Haslam, should wait upon the council with that end in view.

The board then resolved itself into a committee of ways and means, discussing various methods of meeting some of the many outstanding accounts now on the books, and it was decided to push those debtors who are considered able to pay.

The president suggested that it would be admissible to revise the rules and by-laws of the hospital and training school and that a special committee consisting of Directors Davies, Yates and Drury and the president be appointed for that purpose, and this was done. It was felt that this revision could be made the means of removing some of the abuses now existing, most of which appear to grow out of the too prevalent idea that those who have the benefit of the hospital treatment may conscientiously decline to pay for the same.

Mr. Wilson presented an interim report from the special committee appointed to confer with the representatives of the trainmen of the E. & N. Railway Company, explaining that a conference had been held but no definite reply had been received from the railway men. The committee reported progress and were given further time.

Mr. Flumerfelt moved that a special committee be appointed to consider the question of standing committees, to name and define the duties of those committees and report to the board. The chairman suggested that the special committee already appointed include this scheme in their work, with the understanding that Vice-President Flumerfelt by virtue of his office would be a member of the committee.

Mr. Holland differed from this view and a separate committee was appointed to deal with the standing committees, consisting of Directors Holland, Forman, Lewis and Wilson with Vice-President Flumerfelt.

"This was all the business of public interest."

Yokohama Fire Swept

Several Thousand Houses Destroyed in a Big Conflagration on August 12.

It Destroys the World-Noted Theatre Street—Many Lives Lost

Another Great Fire Sweeps Away Over 5,000 Buildings at Toyama.

News was brought by the Empress of China of a disastrous conflagration at Yokohama on the night of Saturday, August 12th, by which 3,237 houses were destroyed and several lives were lost. While the fire was confined to the native part of the city, it at one time threatened the extinction of the great Japanese shipping industry. It had its origin in a little house in the native quarter. The cause could not be learned. Some said the keeper and his wife quarrelled and the latter threw a kerosene lamp at him, while others assert that the bath house employees were playing cards in a shed adjoining, and overturned a lamp by accident. The water being cut off at night—that is the custom at Yokohama—it was half an hour before any water was obtainable, and that delay proved fatal. With a fresh southwesterly gale blowing the fire advanced before the wind by leaps and bounds, while masses of burning shingles and shovels of sparks were borne along high up in the air, all over the settlement and harbor. It was soon apparent that the puny streams of water thrown from the hydrants, after a half hour had been obtained, were utterly inadequate to stay the advance of the flames, which, in addition to their advance before the wind soon began to spread laterally, and in a little while a dozen streets were burning. Before long it was clear that the fire had reached these streets known to all globe-trotters and theatre-goers, was doomed. It was one of the broadest, most animated, and most picturesque streets of the native quarter, and contained five theatres and countless shows, shooting galleries, acrobatic exhibitions, story tellers' places, tea houses, restaurants and other haunts of pleasure. Most of the buildings were of a character not calculated to stand fire, and in a few minutes for long the whole thoroughfare was one huge furnace.

The fire by this time was rapidly approaching the creek which divides the city, there being present all the aldermen, with the exception of Ald. Beckwith, who is still absent from the city on business in the north, and City Clerk Taylor and City Solicitor Bradburn.

The minutes of the last meeting having been duly read and adopted, the consideration of communications was proceeded with.

First came another protest regarding the Hack Stand Nuisance. Mr. A. E. Wyld, assistant manager of the Bank of British Columbia, again calling the attention of the council to a protest made by himself and Messrs. Robert Ward & Co., sometime ago, against the continuance of the nuisance on Fort street, below Government and immediately in front of their premises.

Mr. Wyld asked that some action be taken immediately to grant the desired relief. The mayor said there was no question the matter would have to be dealt with sooner or later. As a temporary expedient he suggested that a temporary one might be well to remove the express wagons from their present stand to below Langley street, and this would leave only the two hacks. Ald. Cameron pointed out that the hacks were standing on either side of the street so that there would be four, and not two, hacks left.

Ald. Humphrey said he understood the people in the vicinity of the corner of Yates and Government are circulating a petition asking the council to take some action to relieve them from the nuisance at the corner of the Pritchard House, and there was no question that something would have to be done to grapple with the difficulty. His worship suggested it would be well to appoint a special committee to revise the arrangement of the hack stand petition.

Ald. Williams thought that when the matter came up before the council on a previous occasion his worship was going to take some action to settle the trouble, and he was standing on his feet to mind that he had undertaken any such thing. Ald. Williams persisted that such was the case, and suggested that the records be searched to find what was decided to be done, but Ald. MacGregor came to the front with the trite observation that this was a subject which no one appeared anxious to face.

He suggested, however, that as something will have to be done, the best way would be for the council to meet a committee representing the hackmen in special session, and discuss the matter in all its bearings with a view to arriving at a solution of the problem. He was quite certain that none of the aldermen were anxious to prevent these men from earning an honest dollar, and certainly they should be willing to assist them in doing what was best for the interests of all concerned.

Ald. Stewart seconded the motion made by Ald. MacGregor, saying there could be no question that the smell from the Pritchard House is a detriment to the surrounding property. He agreed that no one wished to deprive the men of the opportunity to earn their living, but something must be done to remove the nuisance from the prominent corners of the city streets.

The mayor said there was only one hack stand in the city about which was being made, and that was the paved one at the south-east corner of Yates and Government.

Ald. Brydon called attention to another view of the case. The way in which the nuisance is placed at the corners of Yates and Fort was a menace to public safety, and to his own knowledge, with the

The Petition Laid Over

City Council Takes Time to Consider the Angeles Ferry Scheme.

Alders on Williams Curbing His Colleagues With Barging the Scheme

A Contractor's Extraordinary Offer—Fort Street Paving De-lated—Sewer Extension.

On two occasions last evening it required all his worship's suavity and tact to avoid a stormy passage at arms between himself and Ald. Williams, the representative of Centre Ward displaying considerable heat in regard to what he considered an injustice in the expenditure of money for sewer work, believing that his ward was being neglected, and in regard to the much talked of Port Angeles railway scheme.

Ald. MacGregor and Williams, who have been closely identified with the Port Angeles ferry scheme, fought very strongly for the introduction of a by-law embodying the proposals of the promoters, in consequence of a petition asking for such a by-law being presented, signed by more than the necessary one-tenth. The mayor and several of the aldermen, among them Ald. Hayward, who was particularly definite about it, held that there was no compulsion upon the council to introduce such a by-law because the petition was received, maintaining that the aldermen are bound to exercise their judgment. The mayor also pointed out that there is a possibility of a very large scheme being formulated for connection with Point Roberts, and urged that action on the Port Angeles matter be deferred until all the other schemes are considered.

Another point was raised by his worship, viz. that a legal authority on the mainland has expressed the opinion that even the Provincial Legislature has no power to vote a bonus or subsidy to any company for the purpose of establishing a connection with another country.

These objections were ill received by Ald. Williams, but they prevailed with the majority, and the matter was laid over, no date being set for its further consideration.

It was finally decided to inform the writers of the letter that unless the city laid the permanent walk in short time a wooden one would be put in the place designated.

Port Angeles Ferry.

From Mr. Frank Higgins came the following letter: Victoria, B. C., Aug. 28, 1899.

Gentlemen—I have the honor to inform you that there has been deposited with the city clerk a certain petition signed by the owners of more than one-tenth of the assessed value of real property in the city of Victoria, requesting your honorable body to submit to the ratepayers of the city a by-law granting to a company chartered under the laws of the Province or Dominion a subsidy of \$350,000, payable at the rate of \$17,500 per year for 20 years, in consideration of such company operating a steam ferry and passenger steamer between this city and the city of Port Angeles in the state of Washington.

Acting under instructions from the promoters of the company, I beg to submit the following proposition as to what they are prepared to do and the work that they will undertake in the event of such a by-law receiving the sanction of the ratepayers.

Ferry Boat.—My clients will provide, operate and maintain a twin screw ferry boat with a capacity of ten (10) loaded freight cars, or six (6) light passenger coaches, and whatever quantity of broken freight the requirements of the connection will call for, and run the same between Victoria and Port Angeles one or more trips per day. The speed of such ferry boat to be about nine (9) miles per hour, the boat to be constructed in such manner and to be of such dimensions as to be seaworthy and able to make the passage in any weather; plans and specifications of such ferry boat to be submitted to such committee or committees as your honorable body may designate for their approval.

Steel Passenger Steamer.—To provide, operate and maintain fully equipped a steel passenger steamer of sufficient capacity to accommodate the travel between the said cities and also to carry all fast freight and express matter between these two points; said steamer to have a speed of not less than eighteen (18) knots per hour, and to be sufficiently seaworthy to make the passage in any weather; plans and specifications of same to be submitted to said committee or committees for their approval.

Docks and Terminals.—To build such wharves, docks, slips, sheds and depots and lay down such tracks and provide all other conveniences and maintain the same, that shall be necessary for the accommodation of such freight cars, broken freight, fast freight, express matter and passengers as shall be found necessary for the complete handling of any and all business both for the present and future, and to purchase or lease sufficient lands and lands in the city of Port Angeles to accommodate such wharves, docks, slips and terminal facilities.

To purchase or otherwise acquire lands and the lands on the harbor front of the city of Victoria that shall be of sufficient acreage for terminal facilities, and to build wharves, docks, slips, freight sheds, depots and other conveniences necessary and sufficient for the accommodation of any and all business the requirements of such connection may necessitate and to maintain the same.

The said passenger steamer and ferry boat will connect with the West and Eastern Railway at Port Angeles and clients agree to give to the city of Victoria by such passenger steamer, ferry boat and railroad a transcontinental connection at Olympia or other convenient points in the state of Washington that will be acceptable to your honorable body and to the citizens of Victoria in speed, comfort and convenience, and to arrange through fares and freight rates, and thereby positively establish an all rail route to and from this city.

My clients undertake to arrange with their connections at Olympia or other convenient points for an interchange of traffic and equipment so that passengers can go through without transfer, and freight from or to the East can be handled through to or from Victoria without breaking bulk. This arrangement will be established as to the East and the transcontinental lines if possible.

My clients do not expect any portion of the said subsidy to be paid to them until they shall have fulfilled and satisfied the performance of all their promises, contracts and agreements as represented herein.

backs there and a tramcar passing, a bicycle came along and knocked aged persons down.

The motion that a special meeting of the council be held to consider a committee of the hackmen was then put and carried, and Friday evening was set for the meeting, the mayor saying he would notify the Transfer Co. of the decision, so that the might have a representative delegation from the hackmen in attendance, it being quite impossible to communicate with the whole of those interested in the business.

Point Ellice Bridge Suits.

Like an echo from the past, and with some unpleasant reminder of trouble yet in store, came two communications from legal firms in the city, Messrs. Drake, Jackson & Helmenck, and Messrs. Crease & Crease, both to the effect that their clients, suitors against the city in connection with the Point Ellice bridge disaster, were awaiting a settlement. The judgment of the Privy Council having upheld the claims of the litigants, the lawyers asked the aldermen to make some settlement, their clients being not unwilling to concede the reasonable terms if dealt with promptly, but unlikely to forego an atom of their rights if compelled to resort to legal process for a recognition of their claims.

Sidewalks Needed.

Messrs. Crease & Crease had another matter to bring to the attention of the council, reminding that body of the communication addressed to them some time ago asking about the laying of a permanent sidewalk on Cormorant street in front of the stores occupied by the Chinese merchants, clients of the city engineers. If the city was not prepared to lay the permanent sidewalk the owners are willing to contribute a proportion of the cost of laying wooden sidewalks.

Ald. MacGregor and Ald. Williams agreed in pointing out that it may be some time ere the city is able to do the permanent work, and suggesting it would be well to lay the wooden one.

Ald. Humphrey and Brydon favored referring the whole thing to the city engineer, but it was remembered that official has already reported upon it. More discussion followed, Ald. MacGregor suggesting that the engineer might be asked to report whether there is money available for the work. The mayor said there was not enough out of the \$5,000 voted for permanent sidewalks, and then Ald. Cameron came up with his suggestion that in such case it would be better to lay the wooden sidewalk and have done with it.

It was finally decided to inform the writers of the letter that unless the city laid the permanent walk in short time a wooden one would be put in the place designated.

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Ald. Brydon asked if the promoters all the expenses of preparing the by-law?

The mayor read that letter stating this, and needed to say that the council should decide in favor of the law which of all the schemes would be the most beneficial to the city, and that the promoters should not see the duty by its appointment.

The mayor said that before putting it to the council he thought it would be well for him to draw the attention of the aldermen to the fact that grave doubts exist whether the council has the right to pass such a by-law, and for that reason he thought it would be wise to submit the matter to the city solicitor for an opinion. A prominent and eminent legal gentleman on the mainland had given it as his opinion that even the Provincial Legislature has not the right to grant any bonus or subsidy to any railway or other company for the purpose of connecting with a foreign country.

If the Legislature has not that power then certainly the city has not. As the question has been raised it would certainly be well to have it definitely settled before the council pledged itself to the introduction of the by-law.

Ald. Stewart thought it was quite likely that a legal gentleman in Vancouver would be sure to advise that Victoria had not the right to do so, to prevent the city from gaining the needed connection.

The mayor said the legal gentleman referred to has not told him this, and then Ald. Williams, with a show of impatience, said that if the lawyer had not told the mayor personally, he had told it in such a way that it was bound to come to his worship's ears and he could tell it to the council.

"You are simply obstructing this thing," continued the now thoroughly aroused alderman.

"Alderman Williams, Alderman Williams," gently remonstrated his worship.

"Well," replied that gentleman, "we have waited here now long enough to get this connection with the mainland, and I shall certainly vote for the by-law being submitted."

The mayor continued that it would not be very long before a very important proposal would be submitted to the council looking to connection with the mainland via Point Roberts, and it would be wise to have all the schemes under consideration at once before pledging themselves to any particular one.

"Oh yes," chimed in Ald. Williams, "let's have half a dozen of them. You wouldn't have had one at all but for this Port Angeles proposal."

Ald. Hayward thought the motion to submit the matter to the city solicitor was anything but complete and full of loopholes. A consultation with the promoters would be needed, and the whole thing required further consideration. It appeared that a proposal similar to this had been submitted to the Committee of Fifty, but had been "turned down" by that body, and now an agitation had been set on foot to bring it up again by a monster petition being presented to the council. If the scheme was not good enough to commend itself to the Committee of Fifty the signing of a petition, even by ten per cent. of the ratepayers, did not make it any better or more worthy of adoption. It would certainly be acting the wiser part to take time to consider the matter, especially as there are other schemes, the Point Roberts one for instance, and the two others suggesting better communication by steamboat with Vancouver, both of which are in the hands of committees, and have been laid before the council. It would favor this petition, involving the whole Port Angeles scheme, being referred to a special committee for report.

It was true that if this ferry was established with all the advantages promised by the promoters it would give Victoria connection with the Washington coast, but it will open up Washington and not our own territory. We can do no trade over there, the tariff will prohibit it, and will continue to do so. It was therefore practically giving a bonus of \$350,000 for the purpose of building up the trade of that state. For himself he would like most to see the matter, and he therefore moved that a special committee of three be appointed to look into the matter and report back to the board.

This was seconded by Ald. Cameron, but Ald. Humphrey could not see the advantage in appointing a committee. It could be laid over, and although he had

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