

sible parties are under contract with the Government to construct the extension of that road from Penticton to the Coast with a connection with Victoria. It is true that the Canadian Pacific has spent money under its contract, but it is also true that the V. V. & E. has spent money under its contract. That the latter amount is much less than the former makes no difference in the principle of the thing, for they have expended more than any agreement with the Government calls for, because they are not bound to begin actual construction for nearly three months yet. We shall not make any inquiry into the status of the other enterprises from which subsidies have been taken away. Large sums of money have been expended in connection with both of them. It was clearly the duty of the Government to have consulted with the promoters of those undertakings and ascertained what they had done, before wiping out the subsidies on the strength of which they were proceeding. How does the Government know, how does the House know that the promoters of all these enterprises have not entered into contracts, which they will be unable to carry out, if the subsidies are repealed, and for failure in respect to which they may be compelled to pay heavy damages? No steps have been taken to find out the facts of the case.

It is to be hoped that this iniquitous measure will be fought at every stage and that the reputationists will be put on record. Possibly the party whip, wielded by the Attorney-General, may be sufficient to prevent any breaks in the Government ranks on this question, but until the vote shows otherwise, the Colonist will not cease to hope that there may be some members on the right side of the Speaker, who will have sufficient courage and a sufficiently keen apprehension of fair play to refuse to act the part of "dumb, driven cattle" in a matter of this nature. If the measure goes through the House, the credit of all future British Columbia enterprises, having Government concessions of any nature, will be disastrously affected.

(The Colonist, Thursday, December 23rd, 1898.)

#### THE TURNER RAILWAY POLICY.

The Attorney-General's speech on moving the bill to abolish certain railway subsidies, laid particular stress upon the inclusion in the security given by Messrs. Mackenzie & Mann for the construction of the railway from Penticton to Boundary of a proviso that was conditional upon Dominion aid being given to the railway. Such a proviso was entirely in accord with the policy under which the provincial subsidy was granted, and it may be well at this time to re-state that policy.

Mr. Martin may be ignorant of the fact, but every one else will remember that Mr. R. P. Rithet during the session of 1897 made an elaborate and carefully compiled statement of the relation between the money paid into the Federal treasury from this Province and the amount expended in the Province by the Dominion, showing that the former was very greatly in excess of the latter. This speech was heartily endorsed by the members of the Government, and crystallized the sentiment already expressed in a general way in the press and elsewhere, that the Province was not receiving fair play at the hands of the Dominion, and led to the inauguration of a railway policy by the Turner Government, intended to be conditional upon aid being given by Parliament supplementary to that given by the Legislature.

The "Colonist" followed Mr. Rithet's speech with a series of articles on the claims of the Province upon the Dominion. Last session the Turner Government gave effect to the work done along this line by the passage of the Loan Act, which expressly stipulated in the preamble that Federal aid in supplement of Provincial aid was contemplated by the Legislature. In perfect harmony with this plan, the contract made with Messrs. Mackenzie & Mann for the construction of one of the subsidized lines was made conditional upon the receipt of such subsidy. The inclusion of such a condition was not a mistake; it was not the result of undue insistence on the part of the contractors. It was placed in the contract in perfect good faith and for the purpose of giving effect to the policy which the Legislature had endorsed.

In the course of his remarks upon the Bill, Mr. Deane excused his support of it on the ground that one of the planks of the then Opposition during the last campaign was the overturning of the Government railway policy. This is intelligible. It was the only intelligible reason advanced in the whole debate by the Government side. We can understand that a political party might take the position that it is undesirable to aid railway construction in any way, or that the burden of assistance should be borne wholly by the Province, or that it should be borne wholly by the Dominion, or even that we should not have railways at all constructed by private individuals. There is no way of ascertaining whether the party now in power favor either of these propositions or have some other theory in regard to railway construction. As Mr. McBride said, they propose to repeal the Turner plan, but offer nothing as a substitute. This much has been established: The Turner railway policy has been killed, and provincial development has been arrested.

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