"A BUNGLING FOOL."

There was a time when the Colonist was in the habit of discussing public questions in a sane and temperate manner. In these its latter days our contemporary is chiefly occupied in the task of attempting to make the fact plain that it is agin' the government. The more commendable the acts of the Dominion ministers, taken at the instance of the representatives of the province of British Columbia, the more vehement, the more incoherent, the more vociferous, the more hysterical, does our contemporary become. The appointment of a commission to investigate industrial conditions in British Columbia has been received with approval in all quarters. The Vancouver News-Advertiser, a Conservative newspaper which endeavors to be fair in its criticism at all times, and generally succeeds except when an election is pending, for which some allowance must be made, had a notable article on Sunday dealing with this question of industrial unrest and the action of the Ottawa government in appointing a commission to inquire into and report upon the causes of the disturbances. The Colonist says "the investigations of this commission may result in profit, but they must result in loss and damage to the province of British Columbia." The News-Advertiser's opinion is that:

The Dominion government is deserving of commendation for the promptitude with which it has given effect to its decision to have an inquiry made into the continual labor disputes in British Columbia, by the selection and appointment of the members of a commission to make an investigation. The eminent capacity of the Chief Justice of British Columbia to act as one of the commissioners will nowhere be more fully admitted than in this province. With great mental alertness, unquestioned courage, keen discernment of the honesty or dishonesty of a witness, and quick to separate the kernel of essential truth from the bushel of irrelevant or interested and biassed testimony, the Chief Justice will meet the peculiar requirements of the position to which he has been appointed. Although we are not acquainted with his colleague on the commission, the Rev. Mr. Rowe, we are informed that he will be found capable and fitted for the duties that will devolve upon him as a member of the commission. Mr. King, who is named as an ex-officio member of the commission, should afford useful assistance from the experience he has gained in regard to labor issues from his official position.

It is to be hoped that there will be no unnecessary delay in the commission beginning its labors. It is no exaggeration to say that the present situation in British Columbia is intolerable. The evil is not to be gauged only by the strikes which have occurred, and which are now interfering with important provincial industries. The evil effects of such disputes are always felt in a far larger circle than that which they directly affect, and their indirect results in paralysing enterprise and causing the abandonment or postponement of contemplated industrial and commercial projects are oftentimes very serious. That British Columbia has suffered, both actually and potentially, from these disputes, no intelligent man will deny. This province is pointed at throughout Canada as a section of the Dominion that both capital and labor will do well to keep away from at the present time. Yet no one acquainted with its natural resources and with the opportunities which their development would make possible under normal conditions, but must realize that a condition of things which prevents the realization of those opportunities implies something rotten in the state of Denmark.

As we pointed out the other day, the first step towards a better, more wholesome state of things, is to obtain a complete and accurate diagnosis of the disease in order that we may be able to apply effective and proper remedies for its eradication from the social or industrial system. For this purpose a commission endowed with the amplest authority to ascertain all the facts antecedent to and involved in these disputes should be an instrument effective for the requirements of the case. A large amount of testimony will doubtless be forthcoming voluntarily from both employers and employees. But it is not improbable in regard to some matters that both parties will be reluctant to speak; it is not impossible they may attempt to suppress or even to distort facts that they may consider it is not in their interest to divulge. But with the powers with which the commission must be endowed, if it is to achieve what is desired, all the essential facts should be elicited. The Chief Justice may be trusted to deal energetically with a reluctant or recalcitrant witness, whether he be a wealthy capitalist or large employer of labor, or a mechanic or unskilled laborer.

To be effective the inquiry must be thorough and searching. It is not improbable that some witnesses—especially among the employers—may regard the investigation as too inquisitorial in its character, and as trenching on matters that concern only themselves and not the public. But there will be a general disposition to give the commission the widest latitude and range in its proceedings. When we see the transportation system of a continent thrown out of gear because of a local dispute between a railway corporation and a small number of its employees, and the fuel supply of three or four towns shut off, to the loss, discomfort and inconvenience of thousands of people, because of the refusal of a colliery-owner to concede some demand of the miners, it is time to find out who is really responsible for these things. If we can get at the actual facts and fix the blame where it properly belongs, the verdict of the public will be expressed in such a manner that few employers or employees will be inclined to bear the odium of continuing to pursue a course that is inimical to or destructive of industrial peace. But should any be found with the hardihood to persist in a line of action detrimental to the public welfare, there will be little difficulty in securing legislation appropriate for such cases. No individual is too rich or powerful on the one hand, or too humble and insignificant on the other, to think that he can adopt methods that work injury to the whole community. When that fact is thoroughly grasped by all classes, we shall see a great diminution in industrial strikes and lock-outs.

A few days ago Sir Hibbert Tupper returned from the East. In an interview with a Vancouver newspaper this prominent Conservative politician expressed regret at the existing unrest in labor circles in British Columbia. Whether the reports sent out regarding the industrial situation are approximately correct or not, they are creating a decidedly bad effect in all circles. Capital regards the province as an unsafe place to invest in; labor looks upon it as a spot to keep away from. "British Columbia was regarded as in one continued state of unrest; its government was bad, and its labor troubles accentuated the unsatisfactory state of affairs. This is the view taken in the East, and the people there anticipate its continuance until the end of the present period of prosperity and general good times, when British Columbia will be found to be hit harder than any other province by the change." That is undoubtedly the opinion in the East, because the views of Sir Hibbert have been endorsed by many other men who take an interest in the welfare of this province. Suppose the commission should accomplish no other good thing than the removal of such unfortunate impressions, would not its appointment be justified? But we hope it will accomplish much more than the eradication of false conceptions of the state of affairs in British Columbia. The investigations of the commission might bring about a better understanding and more cordial relations between Mr. Dunsmuir and the employees in his coal mines. The mines at Extension have not been closed down because of any difference of opinion as to wages. It is admitted even by his industrial enemies that the coal magnate of Vancouver Island is most generous in his treatment of his employees, whether on land or water, above or below the surface of the ground. That being admitted, it surely should not be an insuperable task to remove the difficulty which has resulted in the closing up of one of the most important coal mines in British Columbia and at the same time to lift the blight which has fallen upon all dependent industries and businesses as a result of the misunderstanding. It is impossible to predict what may come of a conference upon such a matter when the chief participants have cooled down and calmly reflected upon the consequences of their acts. In any case, the public have too large an interest in this matter, are too deeply affected by the consequences of the unfortunate dispute, to stand mutely by while their representatives, acting in their interests, are abused and the strongest language in the vocabulary of the vilest political swashbuckler is applied to them. Already on this Island of Vancouver, where are situated the most extensive measures of the finest coal on the Pacific Coast, there is a shortage of fuel for manufacturing and domestic purposes. We are importing an inferior article from the United States to tide over the emergency. And yet the leader of the government which has proposed an investigation to find out why these things should be is called by the Colonist "a bungling fool." A bungling fool there may be in connection with the unfortunate business, but we have reason to believe he will be discovered somewhere in the neighborhood of Victoria.

EXTENDING THE PREFERENCE.

Under the arrangement made by the South African Intercolonial Convention held at Bloemfontein, the preference to British goods will be twenty-five per cent. A special arrangement, probably still more favorable, will be made for the entrance of mining machinery manufactured in Great Britain. Thus is the idea of preferential trade within the Empire spreading. Australia will assuredly come in under the arrangement. It has been suggested that the British East Indies should also be brought within the scope of the proposed limited zollverein. That great and rich country is governed in all but its purely domestic affairs from Great Britain. Thus far all the world has carried on business in India upon the same terms as the country which governs it and protects it, and which unquestionably does both well. That may be a very good arrangement from the point of view of the Indian, but it is not the manner in which the rest of the world is doing business in these latter days. Besides, it has to be demonstrated that the Indians would be in any less favorable position if British manufactures and merchandise were given a preference in their markets. Internal competition in Great Britain is very keen and prices are regulated by the immutable laws of supply and demand. It is interesting to note that such matters are being discussed, although the preferential idea may be years away from adoption by our British statesmen. The Imperial spirit is much stronger than it was a few years ago. The Liberal government of Canada was the first body to furnish a practical illustration of a policy under which the federation of the Empire might be accomplished. The Conservative opposition does not approve of the British preference. Mr. Borden, the leader of the party, sets himself in opposition to the movement. At one time he referred to the Imperial preference as a humbug and merely a paper affair. Now he claims that Canadian manufacturers are being ruined by it; that we are building up industries in Yorkshire and killing them in Canada. And yet there is something in Mr. Borden's utterances that indicates he feels he is making a mistake; that he fears the people of Canada have no sympathy with his attitude. The growth of the preferential movement should convert his misgivings into convictions. The preference of South Africa will be extended to all British Colonies which desire to take advantage of its provisions. Canada will be included in the list. That will mean a further weakening of the opposition policy, which is wobbly enough now.

WATER METERS ONCE MORE.

The City Council has decided to throw away nearly four thousand dollars which might have been devoted to some useful purpose. The treasury is not so full and fat at present that we can afford to spend so large a sum in such an expensive luxury as water meters. The cost will probably be increased by a fourth before the machines are in operation. No doubt the agitators who are behind this meter movement are actuated by the most commendable motives. They believe they are doing the city a service. We are of a different opinion, and we believe the vast majority of the people of Victoria are of a different opinion. The experience of every city in which the conditions even remotely resemble those in Victoria does not sustain the position of the advocates of and those interested in meters. We intend to keep this matter before the people and to see that they have an opportunity of expressing their opinions. It is admitted that the programme contemplates ultimately an expenditure of upwards of fifty thousand dollars. That scheme should not have been embarked upon without a definite expression of opinion from the ratepayers upon the subject. Another municipal election will not be allowed to pass without aldermanic candidates telling the electors of the municipality what their ideas are upon the subject of meters.

The letter which follows was written by one who possesses a thorough technical understanding of the subject:

To the Editor:—You are quite right to encourage the liberal use of water in Victoria. Victoria has a separate system of sewers. A good authority considers a separate system of sewers without frequent flushing as a separate system of elongated cess-pools, good for the propagation of typhoid fever, diphtheria, etc. The more water Victoria uses the more healthy will be the condition of the place. The position is this: That the difference between the cost of a separate and a combined system of sewers should be regarded as capital saved, of which the interest should be spent in a free use of water. Better to add the cost of the meters to the money already saved and spend the interest of the whole in flushing by liberal use of water. The water commissioner, after all, is neither a scientist nor a sanitarian, and cannot be expected to understand technique. MORE WATER.

RAYMUR'S HOBBY.

We think Water Commissioner Raymur is assuming a trifle too much in asserting that the city of Victoria has decided upon a general introduction of the water meter system. We hope the City Council has not given countenance to any such scheme without consulting the wishes of the ratepayers. The people, we warn the Council, have been thoroughly roused upon this subject, and there will be warm times for the advocates of meters, notwithstanding the opinion of the Voters' League and of the special organ of meter manufacturers, the Municipal Engineering Magazine, when election time comes round again.

We can quite understand the position of municipal engineers in certain cities. The trouble is that the engineers will not consider the point of view of consumers, the people who pay for the water and for the services of the engineers and water commissioners. The scientific men are so taken up with the problem of water supply as it presents itself in large and rapidly growing cities that they lose sight of every phase of the matter save that of inducing consumers to get along with the minimum quantity of water. The result is that they have in some instances succeeded in inducing councils to penalise consumers until every drop of water is measured as carefully and applied as economically as though it were as precious as rubies. In one place they have succeeded in bringing about ideal conditions. The consumption of water has been reduced to thirty gallons per head per day. Probably that is what is aimed at in Victoria. Then baths and cleanliness and salutary sanitary precautions and green lawns and blooming flowers and the features generally which make Victoria an attractive city will be at a premium. In the name of all that is sane cannot our commissioner get the idea out of his head that Victoria must be placed in the same category as cities with streets of solid buildings, paved courts, and not a blade of grass or green thing anywhere except in the public parks, and perhaps in the water works office.

We note that in one city in Canada the idea of adopting meters has been suggested by the municipal engineer. And he gave a good reason for his suggestion—a much better reason than could be given by our Mr. Raymur. He pointed out that forty per cent. of the water pumped was wasted on account of taps being left open in the winter time in order to guard against freezing and bursting. And yet not one of the aldermen of the city of Toronto had the courage to adopt the suggestion of the engineer. Not one voice in the entire city has been raised in favor of such a measure as the installation of meters. On the contrary, it has been pointed out that such a policy would be a huge mistake from almost every point of view, and that the effect upon the sanitary condition of the city might be disastrous. In fact the general opinion appears to be that as water is the chief purifying agent in a city, the greater quantity of it goes through the pipes the better for the health of the inhabitants. Here is what one newspaper says upon the subject: "It is out of the question to equip the whole of Toronto with meters. The cost would be little short of three-quarters of a million; there would be constant expense for maintenance, repairs and inspection. And it is to be feared that the mere fact of the meter being in the house would in many cases make householders too economical, just as they are too extravagant now."

We observe that the tendency of the times is not to place undue restrictions upon the consumption of water in cities, but to give the people all they care to use at the lowest possible cost. In pursuance of this policy in a large number of places water for fire and other purposes is charged for. A fixed sum per year is paid for each fire hydrant and all other other municipal services, which revenue is paid into the water works account. This may seem like taking money out of one pocket and putting it into the other. But it is a business-like arrangement. It enables the municipal officers to find out exactly what the cost of the water works system is and to equitably adjust the rates. There are few places nowadays in which the people are taxed ostensibly for water, but really for general purpose through the medium of an exorbitant water rate. Has this phase of the subject ever been considered in Victoria?

ESTIMATES AND PROSPECTS.

The estimated revenue of the province for the fiscal year ending in June, 1904, is $2,193,476.66, a slight decrease as compared with the estimates presented to the House last year. The expenditure will be increased by a few thousand dollars if it is kept within the estimates, which would be a rather unique experience for British Columbia. The total amount required by the Finance Minister for the coming year is estimated at $2,491,566.31. If the expectations of the Minister are realised there will still be a considerable discrepancy between the receipts and expenditures of the province. It is satisfactory to note that there is some probability of the receipts at the treasury reaching the figure set by the Finance Minister. It is true there has been and is likely to be a lull in the activities of certain of our provincial industries, but others are experiencing what closely approaches a boom or what may develop into a boom before the close of the financial year. The receipts from one branch of the mining industry will undoubtedly be reduced. Prospectors are not so active as at previous periods in the history of the province, and it is proposed to so modify the tax on metalliferous mines as to afford some relief to the industry, which, it is claimed, is unduly hampered in its operations. On the other hand, there should be a marked increase in the receipts from the royalty and taxes on coal. The trouble at the Fernie mines has been settled for a fixed period. A precedent has been set there which may exert an important influence in favor of peaceful and reasonable adjustments of future difficulties. The demand for the product of the mines has never yet been fully met, notwithstanding the effort of the company to increase the output. There are bright prospects for a prolonged period of activity at the Crow's Nest mines, with resultant benefits to the country generally and to the provincial treasury. There are clouds hanging over the coal mining business on Vancouver Island. But they may pass away as rapidly as they gathered. Possibly the public has disposed of some of its interests in the natural resources of the country such as coal, but it is likely to maintain its right to a voice in the settlement of disputes in regard to the operation of the mines and to sustain the action of the Dominion government in appointing a commission, at the request of the representatives of the province in Parliament, to inquire into and report upon the causes of the suspension of operations at Extension. Such an inquiry cannot possibly injure anyone whose position is justifiable. It may do good, but whether there be any result or no result from the investigation, it is undoubtedly a case in which the interference of the state is justifiable.

The rush of settlers into the Northwestern Territories of the Dominion will have a stimulating effect upon the revenues of this province. The newcomers must be provided with houses and barns. There is no part of the continent in which lumber is so plentiful as it is in British Columbia. The demand for this useful commodity has become very pressing. Prices are said to have gone soaring upwards to an unreasonable altitude, and some prairie statesmen have demanded a government investigation on the ground that there is a combine for the spoliation of the strangers who are rushing across the border from south and east. We do not think there can be any complaint about the prices asked for lumber in British Columbia. The cost of transportation and the profits sought by the dealers at the other end may be unreasonable. But the saw mill men of this province are not likely to mount up with a bound to the millionaire class because of excessive profits at present realised. Nor is the provincial treasury bulging out with dollars collected as royalties upon timber. The receipts are increasing, however, we are pleased to note, and we hope they will continue to mount up until the discrepancy between revenue and expenditure finally disappears.

We grieve to say there is no likelihood of a favorable balance being reported under the management of the present government. The receipts of the treasury are increasing, but the expenditures are always kept a few laps ahead. Under the estimates just made public it is proposed to make considerable reductions in expenditures for public works. But the cost of administration is increasing by "leaps and bounds." When the great reformer, who will surely arise some day, appears on the scene he will speedily make the accounts balance, and he will not do it by increasing taxation.

We observe that the Finance Minister expects to receive from the Dominion government between June of the present year and June, 1904, one hundred thousand dollars on account of the head tax on Chinese. We should like to be informed whether the sum set down is arrearages which will be due before the new restriction act goes into effect or whether it is expected that the revenue of the province from that source will be increased by more than one-half under the new law. The receipts from that tax have usually fluctuated between forty and fifty thousand dollars. The general opinion is that the five hundred dollar tax will mean almost absolute exclusion and the entire elimination of revenue from that source. Possibly the government understands the matter better than the average citizen. In that case Mr. Prentice, if he has the honor to submit the estimates next year, will have legitimate reason for congratulating himself on his financial penetration.

Premier Prior says no report has been submitted to the government by the commissioner appointed to inquire into the charges made by Smith Curtis, M.P.P., against ex-Premier Dunsmuir. Now the question is, what was the commission appointed for? Why has Mr. Justice Walkem been paid $750 on account for services which have been of no benefit, and apparently are intended to be of no benefit, to the province? Why were the distinguished services of R. Cassidy, K. C., enlisted to an extent valued at $500 for the purpose of eliciting nothing of interest to the people of British Columbia? Was the treasury overloaded with wealth at this time last year? Or were we as a people under some peculiar obligations to Mr. Justice Walkem and Mr. Robert Cassidy, so that the government felt impelled to appoint the commission as an excuse for the presentation of quite a handsome gift to the two legal gentlemen? We are sure the people would like to know all about these things, because the present aspect of the commission is rather perplexing. The $750 was merely paid on account. Perhaps another bill may be presented before the next session of the House. Then there is Mr. Cassidy. Have our obligations on account of his services been entirely discharged? One hundred dollars a day is often charged by lawyers for their services, and even then they have been known to boast of their generosity in not exacting the maximum scale recognized by the most powerful labor union in the world. The legal representative of the government must have been on duty before the commission of mysterious purposes more than five days. It is true he did not say very much or over-exert himself apparently, but he was thinking all the time. And the thoughts of the legal fraternity count when the day of reckoning comes. The House should insist upon fuller information about the objects and conclusions of that commission.

POPULAR PROMOTIONS.

E. J. Case, Formerly of Esquimalt, to Be Lieutenant—G. Hickey Also Advanced.

The many friends—both civilian and service—will be pleased to hear of the recent well-earned promotion of Messrs. E. J. Case and G. Hickey, Royal Navy, the former to lieutenant and the latter to carpenter-lieutenant, from the 1st instant inclusive.

Lieut. Case was boatswain of the naval yard, Esquimalt, from 1897 to 1902, and was largely instrumental in getting the Naval Warrant Officers' Club erected. Lieut. Hickey was carpenter of the yard from 1892 to 1897, and was prominently known in Masonic circles as a member of the grand lodge of British Columbia, and as one of the principal founders and first master of the "United Service Lodge, No. 24," at Esquimalt.

The above promotions actually make a total of five commissions awarded to well known former warrant officers on this station within the past two years, the remaining three being Lieuts. Wild (R.A.), Wiggins (A.O.D.) and Tennent (R.E.)

KIDNEY SEARCH LIGHTS.—Have you backache? Do you feel drowsy? Do your limbs feel heavy? Have you pains in the loins? Have you dizziness? Have you a tired dragging feeling in the regions of the kidneys? Any and all of these indicate kidney troubles. South American Kidney Cure is a liquid kidney specific and works wonderful cures in most complicated cases. Sold by Jackson & Co. and Hall & Co.—94.

CONGRESSMAN WILBER SAYS

[To The Pe-ru-na Medicine Co., of Columbus, O.]

"Pe-ru-na is All You Claim For It."

Congressman D. F. Wilber, of Oneonta, N. Y. writes:

The Peruna Medicine Co., Columbus, Ohio:

Gentlemen—"Persuaded by a friend I have tried your remedy and I have almost fully recovered after the use of a few bottles. I am fully convinced that Peruna is all you claim for it, and I cheerfully recommend your medicine to all who are afflicted with catarrhal trouble."—David F. Wilber.

Peruna a Preventive and Cure for Colds.

Mr. C. F. Given, Sussex, N. B., Vice President of "The Past-time Boating Club," writes:

"Whenever the cold weather sets in I have for years past been very sure to catch a severe cold which was hard to throw off, and which would leave after-effects on my constitution the most of the winter.

"Last winter I was advised to try Peruna, and within five days the cold was broken up and in five days more I was a well man. I recommended it to several of my friends and all speak the highest praise for it. *There is nothing like Peruna for catarrhal afflictions. It is well nigh infallible as a cure, and I gladly endorse it."—C. F. Given.*

A Prominent Singer Saved From Loss of Voice.

Mr. Julian Weisslitz, 175 Seneca street, Buffalo, N. Y., is corresponding secretary of The Sangerlust, of New York; is the leading second bass of the Sangerlust, the largest German singing society of New York and also the oldest.

In 1899 The Sangerlust celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with a large celebration in New York City. The following is his testimony:

"About two years ago I caught a severe cold while traveling and which settled into catarrh of the bronchial tubes, and so affected my voice that I was obliged to cancel my engagements. In distress I was advised to try Peruna, and although I had never used a patent medicine before, I sent for a bottle.

"Words but illy describe my surprise to find that within a few days I was greatly relieved, and within three weeks I was entirely recovered. I am never without it now, and take an occasional dose when I feel run down."—Julian Weisslitz.

If you do not derive prompt and satisfactory results from the use of Peruna, write at once to Dr. Hartman, giving a full statement of your case and he will be pleased to give you his valuable advice gratis.

Address Dr. Hartman, President of The Hartman Sanitarium, Columbus, O.

WILL PURCHASE A SUPPLY OF METERS

COUNCIL SO DECIDE ON TUESDAY EVENING

Architect for Carnegie Library Will Be Selected by Ballot—More Permanent Walks Proposed.

After long months of weary discussion the city council on Tuesday determined to purchase 350 meters at a cost of $3,745, as a solution in part, if not in whole, of the difficulties which have confronted this city for years in the matter of the water supply. Another matter of importance taken up at last night's meeting was the question of selecting an architect for the Carnegie library. A majority of the council were of the opinion that the calling for competitive plans along lines heretofore pursued only resulted in delay and dissatisfaction, and it was therefore decided to appoint an architect by ballot.

The Victoria Machinery Depot wrote enclosing a contract bond, and asking that the certified cheques be returned. Referred to the city solicitor for report.

Chas. Hayward notified the board that the big Chinese bell, donated to the city by Lieut. MacDonald, was now lying on the C. P. N. wharf. Referred to the park committee.

W. Stein, secretary of the Vancouver branch of the Canadian Manufacturing Association, called attention to the fact that after the annual meeting of that organization a large number of members would visit the Coast in October next. He asked for the council's co-operation in providing some kind of entertainment for the visitors when they come. Received, the writer to be informed that the council will be pleased to co-operate in the matter.

Then followed several communications bearing on the selection of an architect for the Carnegie library. F. M. Rattenbury advocated that competitive plans be called for, and that the selection be left in the hands of some competent architect in Toronto or Montreal. W. Ridgway Wilson was not sure that the proposed action of the board would be the most satisfactory. He believed that a more satisfactory way would be to call for simple small scale pencil sketches free from the name or any identifying mark, and that a choice be made accordingly.

Thos. C. Sorby, Thomas Hooper, A. Maxwell Muir, A. Edward Watkins, S. M. Maclure and J. C. M. Keith petitioned that the council appoint from among their number an architect who shall be engaged upon the usual terms to design and superintend the erection of the proposed library. After some discussion the decision above mention was reached.

John Haggerty wrote again explaining how he was a loser in connection with the breaking of the contract for the supply of stone for the Point Ellice bridge. Referred to the city solicitor for report.

Beaumont Boggs enclosed two accounts outstanding against the Agricultural Association. Referred to the finance committee, to be paid if found correct.

City Clerk Dowler reported having received a number of communications which were referred to the different departments for consideration.

W. W. Northcott reported the assessment rolls complete.

Hon. E. G. Prior and other residents of Pemberton road petitioned that that thoroughfare receive attention when the sewer extension work had been started in that part of the city. Referred to the streets, bridges and sewers committee for report.

W. Mapleton wrote reporting that a deputation representing the trades and labor council had waited on His Worship asking for the use of the city market building for a benefit entertainment to the unemployed, and that the Mayor had refused permission, for the reason that disturbances were feared which might necessitate the calling out of the police.

The Mayor emphatically denied that he had refused permission for this reason. He wanted to remain neutral in the matter of the strike and did not see why he should give the use of the city property to one party more than another, as there were two sides to the story. In this the board endorsed the Mayor's action, and the letter was received and filed.

The electric light committee recommended the erection of a light on North Park street, between Quadra and Cook, and the purchase by tender of a carload of poles. Received and filed.

The finance committee recommended as follows:

"Tenders for the supplying of water meters were received from thirteen different parties, as per list enclosed, samples were also submitted, and on these a written report was received from Mr. Thos. Preece, the foreman of the water works. After carefully examining this report, and having the samples explained personally, by Mr. Preece, we are of the opinion that the Hersey meter, pattern 'F,' will best suit the requirements of the city, both as to price and mechanism. We therefore recommend that the contract for water meters be awarded to W. Bownass for 350 meters, Hersey 'F,' complete, as per tender, and sample submitted, for the sum of $3,745."

The report was received and adopted, an explanation being given that the meter was selected by Mr. Preece on merit before knowing whose it was. A report from Mr. Preece giving them his reasons for the choice was on file.

J. L. Beckwith wrote offering a written guarantee on the Keystone meters, stating that they would perform the work expected of them, would register under a light flow of water and would cost less for repairs than other meters in the market. They are extensively used, and the writer claimed as his price was the lowest submitted that he was justly entitled to the contract. Received and filed.

Another report from the finance committee recommended the payment of $1,939.30 for current accounts. Approved.

Ald. Stewart moved to have permanent sidewalks laid on different streets. The motion was laid over for a week. After decisions being arrived at to proceed at once with the purchase of the Yates street property for the Carnegie library and to have the Court of Revision sit on May 19th, the meeting adjourned.

PARING EXPENSES ON PUBLIC W

ENORMOUS REDUCTION IN APPROPR

About One Hundred and Sixtee and Dollars Less Estimate This Year Than Last.

The estimates of revenue and tures as submitted by the Fina ister Tuesday indicate that the ment has decided in so far as t estimates are concerned to keep penditure down. There will be rel with them on that point, bu objection is likely to be taken to that every branch of the public almost shows an advance on th ates of last year with the exce roads, trails, wharves and brid is on this item that the econo been exercised, and the prunin has been applied to the extent o $116,000.

This decrease is likely to be s criticized, especially by those o members who receive from $1 $3,000 for their districts, and furious at the treatment accorde Government supporters claim th supplementaries will cure all th administration being anxious to a good impression by a budget att in its economy.

Although there is an increase of $8,000 under salaries, this is due officials and not to advances on salaries. The appointment of a minister of mines at $150 a mo mining recorder at Revelstoke, a payment of various incidentals fo ical assistance explains the incre this figure.

A comparison of the estimated ex ture of this year with that of las shows wherein the increases have place. The table is as follows:

Public debt	
Civil government (salaries)	
Administration of justice (salaries)	
Legislation	
Public institutions (maintenance)	
Hospitals and charities	
Administration of justice (other th	
Education	
Transport	
Revenue services	
Public Works—	
Works and buildings	
Government House	
Roads, streets, bridges and wha	
Surveys	
Contingencies	
Miscellaneous	
Total	

Public Works.

The appropriation for the above vice is itemized as follows:

Works and buildings	$187,5
Government House, Victoria	4,5
Roads, streets, bridges and wharves	336,20
Surveys	10,00
Contingencies	30,00
Repairs to government buildings throughout the province	5,00
Provincial Home, Kamloops (general repairs)	30
Hospital for the insane (general construction, repairs and equipment)	11,70
Furniture for government offices throughout the province	5,00
Improvement and care of government grounds, Victoria	3,00
Improvement and care of government reserves (various districts)	2,000
Government House, Victoria	10,000
Court house, Greenwood (furniture, fencing, etc.)	1,800
Court house, Vancouver (repairs and care of grounds)	2,000
Court house, Chilliwack (vault, etc., additional to $500 voted)	700
Court house, Nelson (construction)	40,000
Fish hatchery, Rivers Inlet (construction)	10,000
Fish ladder, Quesnel Lake dam (construction)	6,000
Fish hatchery, Seaton Lake (maintenance)	8,500
Jail, Vernon (furniture, etc.)	3,000
Reformatory, Vancouver (barn, school, furniture, water supply, etc.)	8,000
Jails throughout the province	3,000
Lock-ups throughout the province (renewals and repairs)	4,000
Lock-up, Discovery	1,000
Public schools throughout the province (construction and repairs)	30,000
Public schools throughout the province (furniture)	5,000
Dykes (maintenance)	20,000
Protection works, Kicking Horse River	3,500
Towards experimenting on clearing bush lands	4,000
Total	$187,500

Government House, Victoria.

Repairs to buildings and furniture	$ 800
Fuel, light and water	2,000
Grounds and fencing	1,000
Gardener	600
Miscellaneous (including rent of Fairfield estate)	150
Total	$ 4,550

Roads, Streets, Bridges and Wharves.

North Victoria District (maintenance and repairs)	$ 5,000
South Victoria District (maintenance and repairs)	7,000
Esquimalt District (maintenance and repairs)	9,000
Cowichan District (maintenance and repairs)	7,000
Alberni District (maintenance and repairs)	13,500