

THE SIX MONTHS' HOIST

Given to the Consideration of Mr. Kennedy's Resolution on Company Promotion.

Legislation in the Matter of Aliens—The Mortgage Tax to Be Further Discussed.

Yesterday's was a most interesting session in the local legislature, the consideration of the abstract principle of Ministers of the Crown lending their aid to the promotion of companies formed to develop provincial resources, being productive of the most interesting debate, although the resolution was ultimately shelved on the motion of the member for North Victoria.

Mr. Kennedy directed attention to an error in the votes and proceedings of Wednesday, by which he had been recorded as voting "nay," whereas he had voted "yea" on the first amendment proposed to the resolution in reply.

Mr. Semlin had also detected an error in the votes and proceedings, his amendment having been proposed to clause 3 of the reply, not to clause 7, in accordance with which such a motion would have been ridiculous.

Dr. Walkem again inquired if anything had been done in the direction of providing members of the house with a private retiring room, which had been promised by Mr. Martin in reply to a suitable room was being prepared for the use of the members.

Dr. Walkem also directed attention to a paragraph in the Colonist which referred to the extension of the press representatives from the house library and reading-room. He did not think that the reporters should be debarred from the privileges of the library, where in their duty they very often require to see it, he wanted to go home at once.

On the other side, Hon. Col. Baker argued on a parallel line to the third member for Victoria city, and a vote being taken on the question "shall the chair be sustained," a verdict in the affirmative was rendered on a straight party division of 19 to 12, the names being recorded:

Yess—Huff, Smith, Mutter, Helmecken, Baker, Turner, Martin, Richet, Adams, Booth, Stoddart, Walkem, Pooley, Ebert, Bryden, Rogers, Hunter, Braden, and McGregor—18.

Nays—Sword, Kennedy, Hume, Forster, Macpherson, Kidd, Vedder, Williams, Semlin, Cotton, Graham, and Kellie—12.

Mr. Kennedy then moved, no objection being offered to his resolution, that "this house is of the opinion that none of the ministers of the crown should at any time lend the weight of their official titles to the floating of any scheme for the benefit of any company." He did not think, he said, that any fault could be found with the wording of the resolution, and he would read the opinion, too, that the feeling of the entire province was with him in the view he took, that ministers of the crown should keep themselves clear of all associations calculated to bring them or the country into reproach. There were many reasons why the names of public ministers as such should not be loaned in the prospectuses of companies appealing to investors for their capital. He hoped that members on both sides would see their way to vote for the resolution.

Hon. Col. Baker took the view that the resolution, if meant in the spirit indicated, was not sufficiently far-reaching. It should have provided that the government communicate to the secretary of state for Canada the feeling of the British Columbia legislature that ministers should not be associated with the promotion of private enterprises, in order that the secretary of state for Canada should communicate with the Imperial secretary of state conveying the expression of opinion—for the practice was general in all parts of the Empire, and it would be ridiculous to deal with British Columbia's government alone.

Mr. Semlin cordially supported the resolution, but he thought was sufficiently understood by everyone to demand but brief discussion.

Mr. Helmecken took exception to the ground upon which the Provincial Secretary opposed the resolution, holding that it was quite enough for the British Columbia legislature to suggest the course of action it believed its own ministers should follow, letting other parts of the Empire attend to their own affairs. It was quite competent, no doubt, in this matter, and all his objections were based, therefore, on his professional experience, which taught him how manifestly unfair it would be thus to prejudice the matters in adjudication. He expected that the members of the defendants in the criminal libel proceedings, for the sake of these defendants, he hoped to see withdrawn.

Mr. Williams agreed that the opposition had no desire to prejudice the defence in the matters before the courts, and expressed his willingness to move the adjournment of the debate until such time as these defendants could be heard from. If they held the opinion that the consideration of this resolution would prejudice their case he would at once support the withdrawal of the resolution. The house he did not think would consent, however, to such a course as he had suggested and the opposition to the resolution was to him much therefore a sham and a farce. The argument and loud sounding consideration for the rights of litigants were not sincere—no more so than the statements of the members of the house that they held their official position to advance company promotion in the way the British Columbia ministers had. No member of the Imperial cabinet would think for a moment of doing such a thing, in which there was the greatest danger of abuse.

In explanation Mr. Helmecken again stated his position clearly and distinctly—he had no desire to put himself on record in connection with the principle involved in the mortgage tax, but for the reason that whatever was said would be certain to influence some mind on the subject of the incidental court proceedings.

Mr. Forster took contrary ground, and held that it was the duty of the house at the present time to set itself down as strongly opposed to the principle at stake, in antagonism to which he proceeded to read at length from the London Times.

Mr. Booth thought that in common decency, taking into consideration the proceedings pending, it would be unwise and unfair to proceed with the debate at the present time. He accordingly moved the adjournment of the debate for six months' hoist, which motion Mr. Rogers seconded.

To the amendment Mr. Forster again addressed himself briefly, urging immediate and emphatic action.

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Hon. Mr. Eberts having asked: Has the question of the ownership of lots in old Granville townsite, as between the Dominion and the Province, been settled? Hon. Mr. Eberts replied that no such question had arisen between the two governments.

Mr. Helmecken was informed by the Premier that no communication has been forwarded to the Dominion government requesting a transfer of foreclosed rights of way in Canada.

Mr. Vedder was informed by Hon. Mr. Martin that the government has rented the dredge now at work on the Matequi Prairie dyking scheme, at \$250 per month, upon the terms of the contract, which was for a period of six months, and returning plant in as good order as taken over. It has been on pay since 26th January last, from which date it has been in actual use. The government paid the cost of repairing the dredge.

Tyler is paid a salary of \$200 per month, in addition to each dyking district according to time occupied. The total amount expended on the Matequi dyking scheme since the government took over the work up to 1st February, 1898, has been \$12,477.85.

Mr. Macpherson asked—1. Did G. Cassidy & Co. receive a commission of 10 per cent. on sale of lumber sold by government at Leamy & Kyle's, Vancouver? 2. Did the same commission apply to the sale of lumber by G. Cassidy & Co., as per G. Cassidy & Co.'s statement returned to the government? 3. What amount did the government receive for the lumber sold by G. Cassidy & Co. to the Leamy & Kyle & Co. use to further continue the sale of lumber at a commission of 10 per cent? If so, give date and amount of lumber still unsold at that date.

Hon. Mr. Martin—1. Yes. 2. Statement were rendered by Cassidy & Co. to the assignee of the estate of Leamy & Kyle, not to the government. 3. \$2,347.22. 4. Yes; but the date on which they were rendered, and the amount of lumber sold, is not known to the government.

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been refused assent by Her Majesty, the cabinet would have been prompt to resign. The same course seemed to him to have been the only proper one open to the members of the provincial parliament.

Mr. Adams, who had fathered the similar legislation of last year, was also glad to give Mr. Helmecken's bill his support, although it went he said some-what further than the bill he had proposed and which had come to grief. The too-drastring features could, however, be eliminated in committee, and with the principle of the measure all would agree.

Mr. Bryden opposed the bill for the same reason that he had recorded his vote against the measure of last session—it was, he held, impossible to exclude Chinese and Japanese without legislating against other aliens.

Mr. Kennedy gave the bill his support, and in explanation of some things that had been said, remarked that it was not unreasonable for the opposition to have assented to the bill, because the crown was withheld that the cabinet had something to do with advising his honor, particularly when it was remembered that all members of the cabinet were eliminated in committee, and with the principle of the measure all would agree.

Hon. Col. Baker presented the suggestion of collusion between the Lieutenant-Governor and the ministry on this matter, the former having acted entirely on his own responsibility.

Mr. Kennedy made a hasty explanation that he had not intended to suggest collusion, but to show how the opposition had been misled into thinking the government had something to do with the bill, which was the real object of the bill, he asked the house to contrast the conditions where Chinese were employed and where white labor only was the rule.

Mr. Braden would give the bill his support, holding that it did not do far enough. He would have liked, he said, to see the measure include all aliens and more particularly Americans. It was a well-known fact that a Canadian miner could not go into the United States and enjoy privileges such as were accorded to American miners under the Canadian flag. The Canadian miner could not take up claims on the same conditions as the American miner at home, where there was no such distinction. He instanced a case in point in the rich north land creek at the boundary on an American where a notice was conspicuously displayed, warning prospectors that none but American citizens were to explore the creek. At the same time these American miners who had put up the notice are being accorded every right that Canadians enjoy, and are reaping their share of gold from the Canadian mines.

Mr. Williams, a member for Victoria, stated that he would bring in a bill with the intention of giving American miners a little of the same medicine they were so fond of prescribing for Canadians.

Mr. Turner expressed surprise at the contention of the leader of the opposition that the government should have resigned on the Lieutenant-Governor reserving the Alien Labor bill of last session to the Lieutenant-Governor.

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