

A GOOD INDEX.

Kootenay newspapers are almost unanimous in condemnation of the Turner government...

TRULY WONDERFUL.

A few weeks ago the Turner government's "railway policy" was embodied in a bill...

For aid to a railway from Penikese to the Boundary Creek district...

For aid to a railway from Burr Inlet to Quesnelle, approximately 230 miles...

For a railway from the Coast to Chilliwack, approximately 60 miles...

As to the residue of the loan, the bill provided this disposal: "Any balance of the moneys raised hereunder not required for the payment of the railway subsidies authorized hereby shall be appropriated in such amounts and in such manner as the legislature may from time to time authorize and direct, towards the construction of roads and public means of communication and transport, and of other public works."

Nobody who looked at that bill had any other idea than that the government's plan was first, and most important, to give Mr. Hume and his company an additional bonus for a railway which they were already pledged to build...

"There is little doubt that the wonderful auriferous region between the Mountain ranges which extend from the 49th parallel on the south to the Arctic circle on the north will one day be intersected by a trunk railway line. A railway to Alaska over the great interior table land is one of the possibilities of the near future. This road when built will be lapped by the Coast-Kootenay railway on the south, then by the Canadian Pacific, then by the Coast-Cassiar line. It is a magnificent outlook. Its contemplation evokes nothing but admiration for the broad and statesmanlike railway policy of the government. If it is crowned when it is crowned with success, it is certainly well if British Columbia is the country which we have been telling the world it is—the year 1897 will be a memorable one in the history of our province. It is not the language of exaggeration to say that the policy, which the administration has been able to submit to the house, and to which the house gave a cheerful assent, is in its scope, its simplicity and its possibilities, second only in the history of Canada to the building of the Canadian Pacific railway. It means even more to Canada as a whole than it does to our province. If it receives the co-operation of the Dominion parliament, and we have excellent reasons to believe that it will, the result will be the immediate expenditure of millions of dollars on the employment of good wages for thousands of workmen, the influx of population, the appreciation in value of all kinds of property, the development of new industries and the expansion of those already established, new markets for farm produce and the opening of our imperial province. Such is the object at which the government has aimed in its railway policy and such will be the result sure to follow from it if it can be carried through with success."

The people of Chilliwack, for whose special edification this remarkable passage was penned, must surely lose themselves in admiring awe when they peruse its majestic sentences. If they have some difficulty in believing that the Colonist that all these magnificent conceptions are on the eve of becoming sweet realities, they at least cannot help admiring the imagination which can so magically transform the government's little "railway policy."

"PHENOMENAL" QUARANTINE.

Mr. Shaughnessy of the C.P.R. writes of the William Head quarantine as a "phenomenal quarantine office." Doubtless any quarantine office that ventures to impose an effective quarantine on any of the vessels that belong to the mighty C.P.R. is "phenomenal" in Mr. Shaughnessy's eyes...

Since the general election last June Liberals have been elected in the following constituencies: Brandon, Winnipeg and Macdonald, in Manitoba; Cornwall and Stormont, North Grey, North Ontario, South Brant, South Oxford, North York, in Ontario; Bonaventure, Bross, St. John and Ibeville, Quebec County, Quebec East and Wright, in Quebec; Queen's West and Prince West, P.E.I.; Sunbury and Queen's, N.B.; Colchester, Shelburne and Queen's, N.S.; Saskatchewan-22. Conservatives have been elected in East Simcoe, Ont., and Champlain, Que. Liberal gains—Brant South, Colchester, Cornwall and Stormont, Macdonald, North Ontario, Prince West, Winnipeg-7 (exclusive of Brandon, in which Mr. McCarthy was succeeded by a Liberal). Conservative gains—Where are the prophets who said the Laurier government would not last long!

COWICHAN-ALBERNI'S AFFLICTIONS.

The independent electors of Cowichan-Alberni, who were opposed to sending mere automatons to the provincial legislature are suffering from the pangs of disappointment these days. Their constituency had for some time been known as a pocket borough, which would at the shortest notice provide a sure seat for any cabinet minister who found things too warm for him elsewhere. When Major J. M. Mutter refused to be bull-dozed by the late attorney-general, and when he told that gentleman that while he would support the government he would still preserve his independence, the people of Cowichan-Alberni were hopeful that in the Major they had found a man who would oppose the government when it was in the interests of the constituency and the province to do so. The Major's independence at the beginning of the election campaign won for him a seat in the house. But the Major forgot his independence when he reached the house and he, with unwavering fidelity, handed over to the government the support of the people of Cowichan-Alberni.

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Nanaimo, B. C., 31st March, 1897. Sir, As per instruction by your letter of the 18th inst. I have the honor to enclose a report on the alleged violation of section 16 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act at the Union mines. Working of the above section at Nanaimo, Wellington and Union collieries, so that they can see how they do at each respective colliery.

Nanaimo colliery being the oldest I will take it first. I went and had an interview with the coal weighers. They told me that the coal was weighed by the car as it came out of the mine, the price being 10 cents per ton, but they were not paid 50 cents there being a deduction from the above for dress and fine coal of 5 per cent. After working for some time and the men they were allowed a deduction of 15 per cent. for the same cause, this time it being 10 per cent. After a time they were given a further deduction of another 10 per cent, so that in place of getting 50 cents after the deduction of 15 per cent for dress and fine coal, they got 35 cents per ton. Not being altogether satisfied with the miner's statement, I went to the Nanaimo colliery office. Here I saw Mr. Bate. After telling him how what I wanted and about the letter from the minister of mines, he told me that as per agreement between the company and the men, they were allowed a deduction of 15 per cent. for small coal and dress that comes out of the mine and weighed with the lump coal.

Wellington colliery. I went to this colliery on the 25th inst. and made a full enquiry as to the system of having the coal weighed that came out of the mines. I saw and spoke to quite a few miners on this subject, and I am quite certain that none of them knew the reason. I asked about the weighing and screening of the coal. I asked if they were quite aware that the coal they sent out of the mine and weighed before it was dumped was not weighed before it was dumped. All of them said, "Yes, we know that was the system before we started working." They also told me that they knew that they were not paid for what went through the screen, but that they were paid for the coal that goes over the screen. Some of the men that I spoke to were in the day's working doing some outside work.

they know that they will be paid, and that the coal has to go over the screen before it is weighed, and all our employees were told at one time that the screening was not weighed, neither are they paid for it.

I then saw Mr. Little, manager of the Union colliery. He told me that when they commenced on the present system of screening the coal before it was weighed, all the men at that time were told that they would only be paid for what coal went over the screen, this being the coal that was sent to the mines and all the men were wanted for the miners to send the coal to the mines to be weighed. They are not asked to send out the coal and to be paid for it. It does one ton of good coal that passes over the screen. Mr. Little also said that they had not told all the men that are in the employ that they will only be paid for the coal that goes over the screen, neither have they been told that they will be paid for the coal at the same time when a man gets employed. He knows that he will only be paid for what coal he sends out that passes over the screen, and not for what goes through and between them.

There is about 20 per cent of what comes out of the mine in the cars goes through the screen. After weighing the coal and other refuse there is about 10 per cent of the coal that is in the employ that they could neither sell or use it. They had to erect a coal washing plant to separate the clay and other refuse from the coal. With this washer and plant they got a large percentage of the coal was lost, as they could not sell it, neither could they use it to make this coal saleable. The above washer and machinery in connection with the same had to be got, and that at an outlay of \$70,000.

I have had a talk over the above with many of the men employed in the mines at Union, and also with the manager. Both miners and manager admit that the coal is weighed and they are paid as per agreement between the company and the miners.

I have, &c. (Sd.) ARCHIBALD DICK, Government Inspector of Mines. Hon. James Baker, Minister of Mines, Victoria, B. C.

THE KING OF MAN-KILLERS.