

Friday, the 1st day of May, 1868.

The Council met at 12 o'clock, pursuant to adjournment.

The Hon. the Acting Colonial Secretary in the Chair as Presiding Member.

Present,—The Hon. Messrs. Young, Crease, Hamley, Trutch, Ker, Cox, Elwyn, DeCosmos, Helmcken, Wood, Robson, Spalding, Smith, Ball.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Hon. Mr. Helmcken gave notice of motion.

Pursuant to Order, the Shipping Bill was read third time, and it was Resolved that this Bill do pass, and its title be "The Shipping Amendment Ordinance, 1868."

Pursuant to Order, the Hon. Mr. Wood moved, the Hon. Mr. Helmcken seconding, That His Excellency the Governor be respectfully requested to appropriate a sum of money sufficient to pay off the indebtedness of the Vancouver Island Schools.

The Hon. Mr. Robson moved in amendment, the Hon. Mr. Crease seconding,

That the words from "the" to "Schools" be struck out, and the following substituted: "such part of the indebtedness of the Vancouver Island Schools as the Governor shall deem fair under all the circumstances of the case."

On the amendment being put, the Council divided.

Ayes 8.

Messrs. Cox,
Ball,
Elwyn,
Ker,
Robson,
Spalding,
Hamley,
Crease.

Noes 5.

Messrs. Trutch,
DeCosmos,
Helmcken,
Wood,
Smith.

The names having been taken down on request.

So it passed in the affirmative.

And on the motion having been put as amended it passed in the affirmative, and was Resolved accordingly.

Pursuant to Order, the Council went into Committee on the Thompson River Bridge Bill.

On the Presiding Member resuming the Chair, the Hon. Mr. Ker, Chairman of the Committee, reported the Bill complete, with amendments.

Ordered that the Report be adopted, and the Bill be read third time at once.

Bill read third time accordingly, and it was Resolved that this Bill do pass, and its title be "The Thompson Bridge Ordinance, 1868."

The Hon. Mr. Crease, Chairman of a Select Committee, appointed to enquire into external Postal matters, brought up a Report.

Ordered that the same be received and read.

Read as follows:—

The Select Committee appointed to consider and advise on the external Postal relations of this Colony, with the Imperial, Foreign, and Colonial Post Office Departments, having carefully considered the subject, and taken evidence thereon, beg to report to your Honorable Council:—

That, it is advisable that your Honorable Council recommend the Executive to enter into arrangements for providing direct steam communication between Victoria and San Francisco, at intervals of not less than once every three weeks, at a monthly subsidy of not exceeding One Thousand Dollars; but that no agreement should extend beyond the close of the present year. The Council trusting that the inconvenience of the external Postal Service of the Colony having attracted the attention of the Mother Country, some more permanent and satisfactory arrangement will by that time be completed.

And that should the above recommendations not be carried out, that the Government be advised to make such arrangements for external Postal Service for any less sum, as they may deem expedient, either by way of San Francisco, or Olympia.

(Signed) H. P. P. CREASE,
Chairman of Select Committee.

According to Order, the Council went again into Committee on the County Courts Bill.

The Presiding Member resumed the Chair, no report having been sent in by the Committee.

So the Bill lapsed.

After which, His Excellency Frederick Seymour, Esquire, Governor of the Colony, having entered the Council Chamber, attended by his Private Secretary, and, being seated in the President's Chair, made the following Speech proroguing the Council:—

Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council:

I think I can, without detriment to the Public interests, relieve you to-day from further attendance on your Legislative duties. I have no doubt that the people of the Colony will concur with me in acknowledging the public spirit and industry you have displayed during this short but important Session.

I will take the proposed measures of Legislation into consideration first.

I assent, in Her Majesty's name, to the following Bills:—

- The Courts Declaratory Ordinance, 1868;
- The Limitation of Actions Ordinance;
- The Hudson's Bay Titles Confirmatory Ordinance;
- The Fire Enquiry Ordinance;
- The Legal Professions Ordinance;
- The Intestate Estate Ordinance;
- The Trustees' Relief Ordinance;
- The Shipping Amendment Ordinance;
- The Thompson Bridge Ordinance;

Finally, I assent with satisfaction to the Appropriation Ordinance. You may rely on the utmost economy in the expenditure of funds placed at the disposal of the Government.

With every respect for the ladies composing the Society of the Sisters of St. Ann, I must hesitate before bestowing the Royal Assent on the Bill for their Incorporation.

The Bill proposing to establish a Supreme Court of Justice in British Columbia, I shall reserve for Her Majesty's consideration.

I turn now to the Resolutions in favor of certain future measures of Legislation.

I have to state that I quite agree with you in the opinion that some general Law regulating the acquisition of mineral land is urgently required. Under the

present absence of system, land is frequently locked up, to the detriment of the Colony, in the hands of Companies who have not capital to work its mineral wealth, and conditions frequently onerous are on the other hand imposed in the leases, the observance of which the Government has not the means of looking to. The question shall receive my careful attention during the recess.

I do not yet feel sufficiently acquainted with the practical working of the Vancouver Island Road Act to judge of its applicability to the districts immediately surrounding New Westminster.

The protection of native grown Fruits seems hardly a sufficient cause for disturbing the Customs Tariff of the Colony only passed last year.

No one is more impressed than I am with the desirability of establishing a Court of Appeal in this Colony.

Perhaps of the duties devolving on the Governor of a new Colony there are none so agreeable as the opening up of the Country and developing its resources. Therefore I shall be happy, if I can find the means, to form a trail—if only passable for mules—through the Eagle Pass.

I think that we shall be able to survey a line for a road from Pitt River to St. Mary's Mission this year, but I see no chance of the funds being immediately forthcoming for its formation.

I fear that I shall not be able to sanction the employment of the prisoners in the formation of a waggon road from Gold Stream to Cowichan. There are many points to be considered in the working of men whom we hope to reclaim.

The important Resolutions passed by your Honorable Council in Committee of supply shall receive ample attention. I shall be but too happy to attend to the general purport of your Resolution in favour of aid to the Hospitals. Nor shall the subject of Education be overlooked.

Some misapprehension exists as to the size of the Buonaparte Reserves. Their extent is but one-half of that stated in the Petition presented to you. I will see if they can be still further reduced, but I apprise you that the land which could be reclaimed from the Indians would barely pay for the expense of the survey.

I notice that while adhering to your vote of last year, in favour of Confederation with Canada, you are of opinion that it is not necessary to take any further steps in the matter at present. I think your Resolution a wise one. The question is by no means slumbering; but the difficulties of the project are seen clearer by those who have a wider range of vision than we can possess, and without whose material assistance our efforts would be but vain.

You desire a larger popular element in the Honorable Council. Possibly a too violent reaction from an unsatisfactory state of things has taken place. All must admit that the present Legislative Constitution is theoretically unsuited to the Government of any large English community. My faith in the future of British Columbia leads me to consider it but provisional. I shall carefully consider the nature of the recommendation, if any, which I tender to Her Majesty's Secretary of State in the matter.

Firmly believing that the affairs of the Colony are gradually, though slowly, improving, I think that when next the Legislative Council meets, a more grateful task will be before them than you had to deal with at the commencement of this Session.

I now bring it to a close.

I prorogue this Legislative Council and the same is hereby prorogued accordingly.