

THE DAILY NEWS

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DAILY EDITION

Monday, Feb. 3, 1913.

Editorial Notes and Clippings

THE COAL QUESTION.

The coast cities, and especially Vancouver, are being treated to a good deal of humbug in regard to the coal situation by the Provincial government. It is admitted by the government and its supporters both in the House and in the party press that Vancouver is in a very serious situation because of the inadequate coal supply and because of the extortionate prices charged for what is available.

Within forty miles by water from the coal mines, the citizens of Vancouver are compelled to pay from seven to nine dollars a ton for coal, and in most cases they must pay in advance and book their orders weeks ahead. In hundreds of cases actual suffering has been caused for want of fuel and much illness has been occasioned because coal could not be obtained. Today there is not a dealer in the city who will agree to deliver coal under three weeks, others want seven weeks, and one concern refuses to take orders at all. We cannot believe this situation has the approval of the dealers themselves, who, naturally, want to sell all the coal they can, that being their business. Coal from Princeton is now selling for \$8.50 a ton, being hauled over the Great Northern via Spokane.

When the Liberal government was in power at Ottawa large heroics were indulged in by the Provincial government, which asked for a commission to investigate the coal situation. The Dominion government quite properly answered that the question was a local one and should be dealt with by the Provincial authorities.

Sir Richard McBride's last grandstand play was to telegraph Sir Thomas Shaughnessy asking for a reduction on the rates from Nicola. As the rate is \$1.80, it can be seen that no cut which the company could make in the rate would have any appreciable effect upon the prices charged here. If coal hauled forty miles by water commands \$7 to \$9, any cut that could be made in the Nicola rate would have very little effect upon local prices. Were the Hope Mountain Railway now in operation a cheaper route than the present one

from Nicola would be provided, and in addition to that advantage there would be the competition of two other sources of supply, the mines at Princeton and at Coalmont. This was one of the chief arguments advanced by the Liberals for the Hope Mountain route in 1909 when, it will be remembered, Premier McBride had nothing to say for it but heap upon it contumely and abuse of those who advocated it.

The fact of the matter is that the Provincial government is almost wholly responsible for the present coal situation in Vancouver. The strike in the island mines has been caused by the appointment by Sir Richard McBride, in his capacity as minister of mines, of incompetent mine officials, under whose administration the men refuse to work. The miners have asked for an investigation and although Sir Richard, during the last election campaign, promised that the miners should always be given a fair hearing when they had a grievance, he has not yet seen fit to implement that promise. Instead of doing so, he has exasperated them by appointing a commission which has been sent away into the interior, where its services are not nearly so badly required as they are on the island. If the demand of the men were acceded to and the facts ascertained by a competent and impartial investigation, it is not unlikely that the strike would be easily and quickly terminated.

We assert that this is a question which is wholly up to the government to grapple with. The McBride government has not only headed off any investigation, but it has consented to a capitalization nearly double the price paid for the mines by the present owners. That in itself means the maintenance of the high cost of producing coal. The watering of the coal company's capitalization to the extent of \$10,000,000 should never have been permitted. Coal is as much a public utility as a railway or a bank and should be subject to regulations in the public interest just as those institutions are.

The situation has got to a point, and the public has become so exasperated, that pa-

tience is now well nigh exhausted. The government might very properly consider the opening of new mines to be worked in competition with the present ones. The result should be a very substantial reduction in the cost to the consumer and an assurance of a stable and ample supply. The consumer should be the first to be considered, for it is he who produces the revenues of the government and pays the interest on the exorbitant capitalization of the mines.

The annual report of the Minister of Mines for British Columbia shows a bad state of affairs in regard to the results of the examination for coal mine officials. The report remarks: "The number of failures at this examination was both unprecedented and unaccountable." This condition of affairs is a serious reflection on the administration of the Provincial Bureau of Mines. It proves the necessity of action by the Bureau to establish schools of mines in the mining centres, a policy that has been consistently advocated by the Nelson Board of Trade, the Mining and Engineering Record, and representatives of the mining interests.—Mining and Engineering Record.

GOOD FRIDAY COMES EARLY THIS YEAR

Another Century Will Pass Before the Festival Will Fall on the Same Date.

All sober, upright mathematicians and chronologists of the George Washington variety are agreed that Easter Day bonnets should bloom earlier this year than for 57 years, over half a century, or since 1856.

The earliest possible date of Easter Day, according to the rules laid down for the construction of the calendar, is March 22, but that has not happened since 1818.

This year Easter Day will be March 23, the date on which it fell in 1845 and 1856. Tables of computations by mathematicians have as yet not been carried far enough to show just how long it will be before Easter again falls on so early a date, but that it will not occur until some time after the year 2000 chronologists are agreed.

The rules for making definite the day of Easter Day, upon which depends the rest of the moveable feasts, is that it shall fall on the Sunday after the full moon following the spring equinox. The equinox for the spring of 1913 falls on March 21, which is Friday, and there being a full moon on Saturday, March 22, it brings Easter on the following day, Sunday, March 23.

A three storey concrete building is to be erected at Ketchikan for the Tongrass Trading Co. This makes the third concrete building in the Alaskan town.

AUSTRALIA'S CRUISER HAS SAILED FOR HOME

First of the Commonwealth Fleet Left Devonport Today.

London, Jan. 29.—The second class protected cruiser Melbourne, the first completed ship of the Australian naval programme, left Devonport today for Australia. She is of the improved Weymouth type, displaces 15,400 tons, has a main armament of eight six-inch guns and a speed of 25 knots. Two sister ships, the Sydney and Brisbane, are under construction.

The battle cruiser Australia, now building for the Commonwealth, is nearing completion. She has a displacement of 18,800 tons, a main armament of eight twelve-inch guns and a speed of 28 knots. A sister ship to her is the battle cruiser New Zealand, presented by that dominion to the admiralty, and this warship will be honored next week by a private visit from His Majesty, who will unveil the carved Dominion of New Zealand coat-of-arms.

THEY USED HERRING FOR THEIR FUEL

C. O. Julien is in receipt of bad news regarding a shipment of salt herring shipped to the Orient on the steamer Fitz Clarence. It appears that when the vessel was within a couple of hundred miles or so of the Japanese coast, she encountered such severe gales that she was driven back almost all the way to Alaska, and in the struggle to hold her own against the winds and eventually make her way to Yokohama she was compelled to tear out and burn every partition and other wooden fixture on board, following it up with thousands of sacks of flour, and wind up with 700 tons of salt herring Mr. Julien's company, Oriental Import & Export Co., had on board. The insurance company of course paid for the burned cargo, but on the basis of market price on this side of the Pacific, and not the Oriental side. This incident, coupled with the inability to get cargo space on trans-Pacific steamers will put quite a crimp in the company's herring business this season.—Ketchikan Miner.

Mr. J. M. Clancy, manager of the local branch of the Bank of Montreal, will leave on Friday next on the Prince Rupert on an extended trip in connection with banking business, going as far east as Winnipeg. During his absence Mr. H. B. Cambie will assume the position of acting manager.

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LUMBER SHIPMENTS FROM FRASER RIVER

Present Year Expected to Break All Records—Australia is the Chief Market.

New Westminster, Feb. 3.—Exports of British Columbia lumber from the Fraser River during 1913 will break all records. Conservative estimates place the shipments to be made during the next twelve months to Australia and South Africa at 30,000,000 feet. This will make the Fraser River the premier lumber port of British Columbia.

The Canadian Western Lumber Company has already booked orders for 12,500,000 feet to Australia and 2,500,000 feet to South Africa, and the sales manager for the big Fraser River mills expects that these quantities will be doubled before the year is out. The Brunette sawmills will ship between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 feet to Australian ports.

Foreign prices for British Columbia lumber are exceptionally good at present, and if it were not for the strong home demand the amount exported would be largely increased.

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FRIDAYS, 9 A. M.

GRAND TRUNK SYSTEM

"PRINCE JOHN"

For Port Simpson, Granby Bay, Stewart, Naas, 11 a. m., Jan. 8th, 22nd, Feb. 5th, 19th, March 5th, 19th.

For Masset and Naden Harbor, 12 p. m., Jan. 10th, 24th, Feb. 7th, 21st, March 7th, 21st.

For Skidegate, Alford Bay and other Queen Charlotte Island ports, 10 p. m., Jan. 12th, 26th, Feb. 9th, 23rd, March 9th, 23rd.

G. T. P. RAILWAY PASSENGER SERVICE
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—Drawn for The Daily News by "Hop"

