

VON ALVENSLEBEN NOMINATED AS KAISER'S VICEROY IN B. C.

Emperor's Agent at Vancouver Was to be Governor of Canadian Provinces When War Won by Germany — Millions of Wilhelm's Personal Money Invested in Timber and Mining Land on Pacific Coast

(Special Despatch to The Globe.)

Vancouver, Nov. 17.—The news from Chicago that United States Federal authorities have begun an investigation to discover the identity of a syndicate of German-Americans to whom many millions of dollars' worth of Canadian timber and mineral lands, actually owned by ex-Kaiser William, were transferred by the former Emperor's agent in British Columbia, Alvo von Alvensleben, has aroused considerable interest here, where von Alvensleben for ten years prior to the war had his headquarters.

That von Alvensleben invested immense sums of German money in the natural resources of this Province is well-known; that much of the money belonged personally to the ex-Emperor is also undoubted. In fact, it was commonly understood here for years before the war broke out that many—if not the majority—of von Alvensleben's investments were on the Kaiser's behalf, and that belief had much to do with the prominence of von Alvensleben's firm in financial circles and with his own position socially, for he was much courted by society on this coast and in the adjoining State of Washington.

Large Holdings.

Of von Alvensleben's large transactions there is no question whatever. He acquired immense holdings and the purchase money was as certainly money from Germany. That he was the Kaiser's agent in more respects than merely a financial one is also fairly well established, and, since his internment in the United States, the public here has woven many stories about him, his transactions and his personal ambitions—some of which are not without good basis in fact. It is asserted that Alvo von Alvensleben, when the allies should be beaten and Britain's colonies were taken over by Germany, was the Kaiser's nominee for Governor of British Columbia. The idea at the present date seemed somewhat far-fetched; a year ago, however, it was by no means such a remote contingency that such an appointment would be made, and at the outbreak of the war it was far from improbable, in the minds of German residents, that the people of the Pacific Province should have a Prussian Proconsulship established over them.

The Alvensleben family is one of the oldest if not among the most prominent of the Prussian aristocracy, and a few years ago it was a not unaccustomed boast by some of our wealthier (Canadian) citizens that they had visited the ancestral castle and enjoyed the hospitality of the Count, the father of the Vancouver speculator.

Modest Arrival.

The arrival of Alvo in British Columbia was modest—hardly in keeping with his importance as an Imperial Commissioner. But Alvo von Alvensleben is a German of keener intelligence than the majority of his countrymen, and it is altogether likely that his object was to "spy out the land" before announcing himself. He engaged at first in the salmon fishing business on the Fraser River, and married the daughter of one of the most successful cannerymen in the district. It was shortly after this that he established himself in Vancouver as a financial agent and built up what was regarded as the largest business of the kind in the Province.

Some seven years ago he was joined by three of his five brothers: Joachim, who was the presumptive heir to the Countship, and who subsequently was killed at Lille; Constantine and Bodo, the latter of whom, it was rumored, was shot as a spy in London.

Back to Germany.

Some months before the beginning of the war Alvo's three brothers returned to Germany, but Alvo himself remained. At that time the depression in business had set in throughout the Province, and among the firms that were currently mentioned as likely to suffer from a slump in Provincial holdings was that of Alvo von Alvensleben. That the money stringency affected his business is undoubted, but it is a singular fact that, despite any ready money difficulties with which he may have been confronted, he refused to sell his handsome residence and grounds in Kerrisdale, although he was offered \$150,000 for them. It is now said that he intended to hold court in this mansion in his capacity as the Kaiser's Viceroy when Germany had acquired control of the Dominion.

Alvo von Alvensleben was well liked in Vancouver. He spoke Eng-

lish with the accent of a native and had nothing of the grossness which is usually characteristic of the German—even of the German noble. If his temperament was arrogant, as the Prussian temperament typically is, he successfully concealed the defect. With the people of Vancouver his principal fault will continue to lie in the success with which he concealed his manipulations as a German agent, and the deference which as a friend of the Kaiser he secured from the British and Canadian members of the social world.