

The Colonist.

FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 1891.

THE DEAD STATESMAN.

We are sure that every reader of The Colonist—no matter his political proclivities—will be profoundly sorry to learn that Canada's greatest statesman, Sir John A. Macdonald, is no more. This, the country of his adoption, has been the one with which his every interest, and his every hope, have been identified, and, without any stretch of imagination, it may be well said that he was "Canada's Greatest Son." What the Dominion owes to the indomitable energy, enterprise and foresight of the man whom both his fellow citizens and his Queen delighted to honor, it is difficult, if not impossible, to estimate. He was, too, the admiration and envy of the world at large, for he appeared, as it were, to touch public affairs with a talismanic wand. As an individual, he was a man—full of genuine human nature and personal magnetism possessed by but few. His life work will last so long as Canada exists, and to-day, there will be scarcely one throughout the length and breadth of the land who will not regret that Canada's Grand Old Man has passed away.

PROHIBITION.

The question of prohibition has become one of great importance in this Dominion. It is not yet a burning question, it must be admitted that it is a fair way of becoming one. Parliament has this year been inundated with petitions praying for the enactment of a prohibitory law, and a very large and influential deputation waited upon the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Customs a few days ago to press the subject on the attention of the Government. The day has gone by when men can pickpocket the proposal to enact a law to prohibit the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drinks in the Dominion. Whether the proposal is wise or unwise, practicable or impracticable, it must be met seriously and respectfully by the Legislature and the electors. What a large proportion of the people are agitating for and demanding must be considered carefully and earnestly, and those who treat the prohibition question with contempt and turn its discussion with a joke are not alive to the requirements of the time.

The prohibitionists say that the time has arrived when Parliament should take the question to legislate upon it. In this we think they are mistaken. The prohibition question was not prominently before the people at the last general election. It may have been discussed in some places by a few candidates, but in the great majority of constituencies it was hardly thought of. The election, as we all know, was run upon another and a very different issue. All will have to allow that the prohibition question is one of such importance that the people should be given an opportunity of pronouncing upon it separately in the usual way. A plebiscite is proposed, but plebiscites, unknown to the British constitution, and where they have been tried in other countries the result has not been altogether satisfactory, and they have not, it is contended, expressed the real desire of the majority of the people on the subjects for which they were taken.

We do not see that there need be any hurry to get the popular verdict on prohibition. It is a subject that requires careful consideration, and the education of the electorate with regard to it is, as far as our observation extends, very far from being finished. If it cannot stand agitation and discussion, it certainly ought not to be adopted.

The question of prohibition has, we are convinced, in different parts of the Dominion suffered from the undue haste and misdirected zeal of its advocates as well as from indifference and want of earnestness on the part of the electors. The fate of the Scott Act in many communities of Eastern Canada should convince those who favor prohibition of the unwise character of snatching a verdict from communities which are not prepared to accept it in good faith. Apparent success has been worse for them in many places than even disastrous defeat would have been. The agitation appeared to be successful and the election ended in victory. But the operation of the law was a grievous disappointment to the true friends of temperance. The reason of this, in our opinion, was that the friends of temperance were too ready to take consent for conviction. They were for the most part earnest and sincere, and they too readily took for granted that those who voted for the Act were also earnest and sincere. The result showed that they were not. Very many who appeared favorable to the introduction of the act, and voted for it, when it came into operation, were the first to violate it themselves and to countenance its violation by others. Then there were large numbers who took no part in the agitation, one way or the other, who considered it no harm to ignore the law, and to throw obsta-

cles in the way of those who desired to enforce it. The Scott Act in communities that were unprepared for it—that were not educated up to it—was a dead letter, if it was not indeed something worse. Had its advocates not been so eager, had they taken more time to create a public opinion in its favor, they would perhaps have had fewer apparent triumphs, but they would not have had to deplore so many failures.

We think that those who are getting up the petitions in favor of prohibition are making the same mistake as did the advocates of the Scott Act. They are of opinion that every one who signs the petitions really desires prohibition, and will help to enforce a prohibitory law, when one is enacted. This is a very great mistake. Many sign the petitions who are too good natured and too desirous to gain the good opinion of those who present it to them, to refuse. A large proportion of them have no convictions on the subject, they have never given it a serious thought, and others sign it for form's sake, because they believe that the agitation will come to nothing. We must repeat that, on this question of prohibition, there is a sad want of sincerity and earnestness among those who do not believe in the principle. They sign prohibitory petitions out of mere complaisance, or because they are afraid to say what they really believe. It is a great mistake to regard these as favoring prohibition. The friends of prohibition may depend upon it that, when the time to uphold a prohibitory law comes, nine out of ten of them will be found wanting.

The experience which Canadian prohibitionists have gained from the operation of the Scott Act should convince them that, in the matter of the enactment of a prohibitory law, "the more haste the less speed," is emphatically true. If they apply undue pressure to the Government, and to their representatives, they may, perhaps, appear to gain ground and to be near the accomplishment of their purpose, but they will find in the end that their advance was illusory, and that they had not furthered the cause of temperance in the least.

Then there are very formidable financial and political difficulties which the prohibitionists will have to meet when this question comes fairly before the people, which have not yet been even generally discussed. How, for instance, do they propose to replace the seven millions or so which will be lost to the revenue if no intoxicating drink is made in Canada, or allowed to enter its territory? It will not do to answer this is a general way. It is a practical question, and the plan proposed to replace what prohibition will take out of the treasury must be placed before the people in a definite form and be discussed from the platform and in the press. This will take time. The prohibitionists must not close their eyes to the fact that they have hard work before them. They cannot expect to take the people by surprise. The change they agitate for is too important; from every point of view, to be made suddenly and without due preparation. There are very few thoughtful men in this Dominion who will say that the time has arrived for the Parliament of the Dominion to take the question of prohibition into consideration. The people from whom Parliament derives its authority must first be consulted.

BACCARAT.

Baccarat, the game played at Mrs. Wilson's by the Prince of Wales and his fellow guests is simply a gambling game. It is a French game and has become fashionable, taking the place of Languishet and Vingt-et-un. It requires no skill to play it. What makes it exciting is the betting. Whether the player wins or loses depends upon the number of pips on the cards dealt out to him. From the description of the game contained in the American Hoyle there is very little fun in Baccarat, and it requires no exercise of brain to play it. If the dealer gives you the right cards you win, and if he does not, you lose. Nothing that the player can do, except perhaps turn his chair, can have any effect on his chance of winning. We should say that the game is decidedly stupid, and is not more worthy the attention of men and women of intelligence than shaking dice or tossing coppers. It will not increase the British people's respect for the aristocracy to find that they have no more elevating way of passing their time than by playing this gamblers' game of Baccarat. There is in fact no play in it; it is simply a device to get hold of each other's money.

THE NICARAGUA CANAL.

There is every prospect that the Nicaragua Canal will be completed in a few years. Men of energy and enterprise have undertaken the work, and it is talked about by many as if it were already an accomplished fact. The sum required to construct the canal does not appear too great to be raised for an undertaking that cannot fail to yield a very large revenue. The canal is to be 160.45 miles long. But there will be only some twenty-six miles of excavation. The greater part of it is 110 feet above the level of the sea. There are to be consequently three locks at each end. These locks are to be very large, 1,000 feet by 85, and 30 feet deep. It is expected that two or three ships can pass through at one lockage. It is calculated that it will take a vessel twenty-eight hours to pass through the canal from end to end. The distance saved between New York and San Francisco will be 9,894 miles. It is difficult to imagine the revolution which this canal will bring in the commerce of the Pacific Coast. San Francisco will be, by steamer, within twenty-five days of Liverpool, and the dangers as well as the delay of the route round the Horn will be avoided. The change cannot but affect the trade of British Columbia. It is hard to imagine what con-

sequences will result from bringing Great Britain ten thousand miles nearer this Province than it now is. The sum required to construct this great work is not so large as might be imagined. The engineers say that it can be completed for \$100,000,000. Five millions have already been expended upon it, and the work done is within the estimate.

The country through which the canal passes is said to have a splendid climate and to be very healthy. The mortality among the workmen is comparatively small. The navigation along by far the greater part of the route is by lake and river, and will, no doubt, be very pleasant.

The projectors have had many difficulties to contend with, but they have surmounted the greater number of them. They have made a good beginning, and they believe that it will be comparatively easy for them to raise all the money they still need.

AN INCIDENT.

A very pleasant incident took place at a meeting of the Royal Society of Canada, which holds its sessions this year in Montreal. The Governor-General was present, and Mr. Benjamin Sulte read, what appears to have been, a paper on Canadian history. In the course of his remarks he brought to light the following fact, which we regard as related in the Toronto Empire's report:

"It appears that when the 40 or more French Canadians who had taken up arms in 1837 and 1838, and had escaped the gallows to be transported to Australia, were about to return to Canada, they were asked how many there were in the party and how much it would take to carry them to the banks of the St. Lawrence. The information being given, the good gentleman in question wrote out a cheque for the entire amount and placed it at the disposition of the poor strangers in a strange land. 'Now, who was this gentleman?' asked Mr. Sulte, amid breathless silence, and even the Governor never dreamed of the great surprise that was in store for His Excellency and the other interested listeners. 'This gentleman, who conferred such a favor upon our poor patriots in the hour of our distress, was no other than the distinguished father of our present Governor-General, Lord Stanley of Preston.'

"His Excellency was most deeply touched by the recital, as he had never before heard of the incident, and in fact it only recently came to the knowledge of the learned essayist."

EVIDENCE SUPERFLUOUS.

The methods of the Times are unique. It evidently considers that it is under no obligation to prove what it asserts. It makes, what it believes to be, a serious charge against the Provincial Government, and when we demand specific evidence in proof of that charge, it declares in effect that it is too much trouble to hunt up grounds, which it very well knows are no grounds at all. Let it be thought that we are misrepresenting our contemporary we will quote its own words. "The Colonist challenges proof to the contrary. The Colonist will prove that the Times will not go to the trouble of producing specific proof, and hence is bold." Our readers will agree with us that this is about the coolest and the most impudent statement that could possibly be made. A charge is preferred, evidence is demanded, and the accuser replies that he will not go to the trouble of producing proof. If before any tribunal, even the coarsest, the roughest and the most ignorant—that of Judge Lynch himself—an accuser should make such a cheeky and altogether unparliamentary reply as this to the demand for evidence, in support of his accusations, he would be metaphorically, if not literally, kicked out of court. And he would richly deserve such treatment.

Every one can see that the reason why the Times refuses to produce evidence in support of its charge, that the Government ordered the troops to be sent to Wellington, is simply that it has no evidence to produce. Such evidence is not obtainable, for the very good and sufficient reason that there is not a single iota of truth in the charge. The Government had nothing to do with sending the troops to Ottawa. It did not move itself, or cause any one to move, in the matter.

The Times reproduces Col. Holmes' report, in which that officer says he spoke to the Attorney-General about the matter, and asked his advice as to the legality of the requisition sent to him by the three magistrates. Mr. Davies, being a lawyer, said it was according to law. To what law? The law of the Province? No. The law of the Dominion? Yes. The law of the Dominion makes provision for precisely such cases, and can be set in motion not only without the co-operation of the Provincial Government but against its will. It is not hard to imagine that there might be a disturbance in a province, in which the Local Government is interested and was doing its best to foment and aggravate. Is the Dominion to be powerless in such a case? Is it to stand by with folded hands and see the peace disturbed and its authority defied? Not a bit of it. At the representation of three loyal magistrates who are not afraid to do their duty, the troops can be called out to quell the disturbance even if the insurgents or the rioters are led by the leader of the local government himself. This may be news to the Times. But it is not hard to see that in constitutional matters it has a very great deal to learn.

Our readers see that it was not necessary that the local government should interfere in the matter of calling out the troops. It could not order them out, and it could not prevent their being sent out to Wellington if it desired to do so. The whole matter was outside its juris-

diction. This, of itself, is a sufficient answer to the small politicians who desire to throw the responsibility of sending the troops to Wellington on the shoulders of the local government. Governments are not in the habit of unnecessarily taking upon themselves duties that are unpleasant. They are too apt to defer the performing of such duties as long as they can show a reasonable pretext for delay and sometimes, indeed, without any such pretext.

The Times assumes, without even attempting to show why, that the magistrates must have acted under the instructions of the Government. It says:—

"Three non-resident parties, living 80 miles from the scene, never assumed the responsibility of ordering out troops on the strength of Mr. Davies' unofficial representation. They must have known that their requisition had the sanction of authority."

To be sure, they knew it had the very highest and most authoritative sanction—that of the law of the land. What more did they want than that? Is the Provincial Government above the law of the Dominion? It must strike the intelligent readers of the Times as singular that the organ allows itself to remain in doubt about this matter. There is a very obvious way of getting reliable information on the subject. The three magistrates are residents of the city. They are all courteous gentlemen. Why does not its representative ask them about their authority for signing the requisition? Is it too much "trouble" to get that specific proof? What is the use of writing long articles when a word from one of them would settle the whole matter? Then again, there is the Hon. John Robson, who is always ready to give information on public questions to all who apply for it in a proper manner. How is it that the Times has not applied to him? He could, in two minutes, resolve all its doubts. If our contemporary is too lazy to make the little exertion necessary to inform itself on these subjects it cannot expect the public to place any reliance on its unsupported statements.

The Times would have the public believe that the Hon. Theodore Davies is the beginning and the end, the life and the soul, of the local Government, and that when he yawns it is a sure sign that the Government is asleep. There could not be a greater mistake than this. Without the authority of his colleagues Mr. Davies' acts are no more the acts of the Government than are those of the editor of the Times.

A DISH OF CROW.

The politicians of Newfoundland have been obliged to come down from their very high horse in a most undignified way. They undertook to dictate to the Home Government how it should deal with France. Great Britain, according to them, must, on pain of their displeasure, insist upon its interpretation of the treaties which extended to the French fishing privileges off the coast and on the shore of Newfoundland. Her Government were to treat the claims of the French Government as absurd, and must act as if they had never been made. The *modus vivendi* which had been made, without Newfoundland's consent, pending the settlement of the matters in dispute, must be withdrawn, and all such matters, as well as the claim to catch and pack lobsters, must be submitted to the court of arbitrators. Lord Salisbury must knuckle under to the incessant Newfoundlanders, or they would do something dreadful. They even threatened the British Premier, that if their demands were not granted they would join the United States.

The bumpiness of the Newfoundlanders amused even those who sympathized with them. They made allowances for their unreasonableness, but wondered how it was that they could not see that good faith must be kept with France, and that it was absurd to expect that a first class power, such as she is, would surrender what she believed her just claims because a few colonies considered that she demanded more than was her right. The British Premier, however, did not seem to have been in the least disturbed by the clamor made by the Newfoundlanders. He was determined that the uproar which they were making would not force him to act in such a way as to create new difficulties between the country, for whose peace and welfare he was responsible, and France. He negotiated the *modus vivendi* and the arbitration, and then proceeded to procure the enactment of the law necessary to put both them and the treaties with France with respect to Newfoundland in force.

The deputation from Newfoundland was treated with the utmost kindness and consideration, and the Newfoundland First Minister was heard at the bar of the House of Lords. But Sir William Whiteway and his colleagues soon found that men of both parties in England had determined that the national obligations with France should be honestly carried out, and that due respect should be paid to the views of the French Government with regard to the interpretation of the treaties. The members of the Newfoundland deputation were convinced that it was hopeless to expect that the British Government would recede from the position it had taken. They were told, however, that if the Newfoundland Legislature would enact the law needed for the proper enforcement of the *modus vivendi* and the treaties, the measure then before the House of Lords would not be pushed through the Commons. Sir William Whiteway saw that there was nothing left for Newfoundland but to submit, and he telegraphed his determination to his colleagues in St. John's. The Newfoundland Legislature received the news with indignation. It was intolerable that they, after all they had said and done, should pass an act to enforce the objectionable, and bitterly denounced *modus vivendi*, and along with that, the award of the arbitrators appointed without their knowledge and con-

sent. It was, to tell the truth, a most unpleasant dish of crow to set before the Newfoundland Legislature. It is no wonder that they at first angrily refused to touch it, and they telegraphed their determination to the deputation in London. The House sat with closed doors; fiery speeches were made; the delegates were denounced, and a strongly worded resolution, condemnatory of the action of the deputation, was passed. The action of the House was almost unanimous.

When news of what had been done reached London, the deputation which had been repudiated felt nearly as angry as did the legislators in St. John's. But Sir William Whiteway is evidently a man not to be trifled with. He telegraphed back that if the Legislature refused to pass the Act required, he would return home at once and dissolve the House of Assembly. The members of that body evidently believed that the Premier meant what he said, and the prospect of going to the country at that particular time was not, by any means, pleasant to them. So they had the dish of crow brought up again and proceeded to eat it with a very ill grace. After many very faces, and some bitter speeches, they passed a resolution pledging themselves to carry a measure to give effect to the *modus vivendi*, the award and the treaties. Mr. Morine, one of the delegates, arrived soon after, bringing with him the distasteful bill, out and dried, which was carried in the Legislature on the 19th of last month.

This, we presume, the end of the Newfoundland agitation. Great Britain will, no doubt, try to get the best terms it can for the people of Newfoundland, but it will not attempt to repudiate its obligations with France, entered into long before Newfoundland had a Government of its own—before, indeed, it could be called a colony. The mistake that the Newfoundlanders made was to attempt to prevail upon the Mother Country to disregard its treaty obligations.

A PROHIBITION VICTORY.

Among the devices that were resorted to to evade the prohibitory laws of the States was the importation of liquor in small packages, which could be sold unopened without violating the State law. This was the original package dodge, which was considered exceedingly clever. The Legislature of Iowa passed a law making it illegal to sell these unopened original packages. The constitutionality of this law was contested, and the question as to whether it was constitutional or not was submitted to the Supreme Court. The decision was against the law. Congress was then applied to, to pass an act providing that States in which prohibitory laws had been enacted could enforce those laws, and prevent the sale of liquor imported from other States in the original package. This law, by the opponents of prohibition, was declared to be unconstitutional, and the Supreme Court was again appealed to. The Court decided that the law is constitutional. This is looked upon as a great victory by the prohibitionists of the United States, because it makes prohibition laws much easier of enforcement than they have hitherto been. But it will, we venture to say, be found exceedingly difficult to prevent those who are fond of strong drink, and those who look upon the prohibitory laws as arbitrary and oppressive, from breaking the law they detest and obtaining the drink they like. The Ottawa Citizen, commenting upon prohibition in Iowa, says:

"The fundamental fault with the Iowa Prohibition Law seems to be that the feeling in the State is by no means so largely in favor of it as was supposed; and, therefore, there is a strong disposition to fight the law and evade it in every way. Leaving for the moment the financial aspect of a Prohibition Law out of the question, it may be fairly taken for granted that the passage of such an Act by Parliament, would at once result in the question of its constitutionality being raised, and long and costly litigation would ensue. The social and fiscal revolution involved in the adoption of Prohibition is not one which can be lasting or enduringly beneficial. If brought about hurriedly, and before it has been thoroughly and thoughtfully considered in all its bearings; and, therefore, we again urge upon Parliament the advisability of acting only after due investigation and deliberation on this matter, and not on a mere hasty impulse. Go slow, gentlemen, if you wish to be sure."

There is a great deal of truth and common sense in what the Citizen says. Laws that do not carry with them the approval of the great majority of the people, and which do not recommend themselves to the public conscience as being just and necessary, are always difficult of enforcement.

CANADA'S FUTURE.

We see that some of the American newspapers seem to think that Canada will be in a bad way when Sir John Macdonald dies. The loss of that eminent statesman is certainly a great misfortune to Canada. Sir John understood Canadian and Canadian public affairs better than any man living, and he possessed the art of reconciling differences, and of prevailing upon men to adopt his views and to carry out his policy. It is well for Canada that when the foundations of the Confederation were laid there was a master builder like Sir John Macdonald to superintend the work from the beginning to the end. But it would indeed be singular if the five millions of intelligent Canadians, educated to govern themselves, would be unable to keep their structure together after the chief architect had been taken away. We must not be considered as wishing to detract from the great reputation which Sir John Macdonald has fairly earned when we say that part of the credit of his many achievements is due to the material with which he worked. If Canadians did not possess intelligence enough to appreciate Sir John Macdonald, enough to appreciate the standard of the Presbyterian Church, the vast majority of its ministers, not only in the United States, but in Great Britain and the Dominion of Canada, must be wrong. Is this likely? We are by no means believers in the infallibility of ma-

which caused them to be, under his leadership, one of the model self-governing peoples of the world. It cannot be supposed that these Canadians who had their leader taken away will be like sheep without a shepherd. There is no fear of such results. They are well organized, and they possess something more than the instinct of self-government. They have had experience, and they will not doubt profit by it. The new leader, whoever he may be, may not possess the tact, the fertility of resource, or the knowledge of human nature that were so remarkable in Sir John Macdonald, but he will not doubt be a man of ability and one who will hold the reins of Government with a firm hand. He will not find the people of Canada difficult to manage. They are reasonable, they are law-abiding and they possess the Anglo-Saxon virtues of compromise. They may murmur and grumble and agitate, but they will take care not to carry matters to extremes. If the parties that are formed among them cannot get all they want by constitutional means they will take what they can get and wait with patience for an opportunity to secure more. Canadians are patriotic. They love their country too well to allow it to be ruined by contending factions, and are too proud to give their envious or ill-natured neighbors a chance to say that they are not able to govern themselves. Canada unquestionably feels the loss of her Grand Old Man, but when the days of mourning are past she will composedly, courageously, and we confidently believe, prosperously continue the career she has so auspiciously commenced.

THE SPECTATORS.

The privileged few who are allowed to witness the Baccarat trial do not appear to be at all impressed with the seriousness of the case. They do not show by their manner that the issue is the position and the character of a man who has hitherto been held in high repute by the society in which he moved. The man considered fit to associate with the Prince of Wales must not only have occupied a place high in the social scale, but his honor must have been untarnished and his character without a stain. If the decision is against Col. Gordon Cumming, he will leave the Court disgraced and a ruined man. To him the issue of the trial must be more serious than one of life and death. If Col. Cumming is a man of fine feeling, if he sets a high value on the name he bears, if he has a proper regard for his good name, he would much rather be put on trial for his life for an offence to which no disgrace is attached, than to occupy the position he does. To an honorable, high-minded man, the idea of being convicted as a card-sharper must be intolerable. Yet, the gay crowd who fill the Court do not appear to be at all impressed with the dreadful consequences involved in a verdict adverse to Col. Cumming. They go to the Court to be amused. They are in search of a new sensation. They laugh and chat, and eat and drink as if they were spectators of a play or of a horse race. We wonder what Col. Cumming thinks of the frivolity and the thoughtlessness of his set. He goes into court to be tortured. They sit by and stare and laugh as often as there is a pretext for laughter.

There is, however, a vast multitude in all parts of the empire who regard the proceedings at that court with very different feelings. It is composed of the serious, earnest, thoughtful, moral people who form the real strength of the British Empire, and who give character to the British people. These men and women note with surprise and pain the kind of people who are the associates of the future king of England, and the sort of amusements which they indulge in. The glimpses which they get of the inner life of royalty is neither pleasant nor assuring. They naturally conclude that there is not a great deal to be hoped for from a prince who chooses to associate with such persons, and who employs his leisure in such a way. The Methodists of South Wales have already given utterance to feelings with which they contemplate the revelations made at the trial, and the resolution which was passed at the quarterly meeting, expresses the sentiments of millions who do not admire the Methodists, and who may consider the resolution ill-timed, injudicious and presumptuous. They are loyal to the Throne, they believe in monarchy, and they are grieved to see the Prince of Wales doing anything which is calculated to bring royalty into disrepute and to give its enemies cause to speak evil of the Royal Family. It is a pity that the Prince of Wales does not see that it is because the private life, as well as the public life, of the Queen has deserved and won the respect and admiration of such people as those who compose the South Wales Quarterly Meeting, that she has preserved not only the loyalty of the nation, but has made monarchy popular in Great Britain and throughout the whole Empire. Queen Victoria, by her private virtues, has made the Throne of England a safe and an easy seat for her son and her grandson, and it will be most unfortunate, both for them and for the British people, if they, by their follies and their weaknesses, render it unsafe and uneasy. It is not so difficult to do this in these days as some imagine. The time is one of change and unrest, and the future King of England would do well to study the life and follow the example of Queen Victoria.

THE BRIGGS CASE.

Those who have read the proceedings of the General Assembly at Detroit on the case of Dr. Briggs, must have come to the conclusion that if he is right in his interpretation of the standard of the Presbyterian Church, the vast majority of its ministers, not only in the United States, but in Great Britain and the Dominion of Canada, must be wrong. Is this likely? We are by no means believers in the infallibility of ma-

justices, and if the matter to be decided upon was some new scientific theory or some dark and deep point in metaphysics we would be inclined to believe that the minority, let it be ever so small, was just as likely to be right as the majority. But with regard to the interpretation of a book of human authorship, drawn up for the essential purpose of defining the opinions and beliefs of a denomination of Christians, which has been regarded as an authority by that denomination for hundreds of years, it is but reasonable that the interpretation of the majority, not only of the present generation, but of past generations, is the correct one. It is very hard indeed for any one who reads the Westminster Confession of Faith at all intelligently and without prejudice, to come to the conclusion that any of the divines that drew it up believed as Dr. Briggs believes; and it is certain that thousands of educated men, who have closely studied that work, and subscribed to it as a standard of truth, have regarded such opinions as those held by Dr. Briggs as rank heresy. The decision arrived at by the General Assembly, at Detroit, that a man holding those opinions is not qualified to be a teacher of theology in a Presbyterian college would, we are satisfied, be the decision pronounced by any previous General Assembly, no matter where it may have been held. The proportion of those who voted against the veto—59 to 440—would, no doubt, have been considered dangerously and disgracefully large by the fathers and grandfathers of the present generation of Presbyterians.

Many, no doubt, conclude that the majority of the Assembly was narrow, bigoted and behind the age. This is manifestly an unjust conclusion. The question which the Assembly had to decide was not, are the views of Dr. Briggs sound or unsound, safe or dangerous, or even, scriptural or unscriptural? but, are they in accordance with the standards of the church in which he occupies the position of teacher? It seems to us that any man, even if he believed in the abstract, exactly as Dr. Briggs believes, if he were clear-headed and conscientious, would have voted against Dr. Briggs continuing to occupy the position to which he had been appointed. If such a man saw—and we cannot see that he could help seeing—that Dr. Briggs' views are at variance with those fairly deducible from the Confession of Faith, he would have no other course open to him than to vote with the majority.

The complaint with many is that in these days there are too many clergymen and professors who believe and teach what their different churches oppose and condemn, and retain their positions as pastors and teachers in those churches. They try by subtle arguments and refinements of logic to convince themselves and others that they may eat the Church's bread while they do not really believe the Church's doctrines. This plain people regard as dishonesty. They believe that, when a man becomes convinced that the creed he has undertaken to teach, and the articles and standards to which he has subscribed, are erroneous, he ought to leave the church forthwith. This is not, in our opinion, narrow; it is not bigotry; it is simple common sense and common honesty. If a man belongs to any society, as its member he must be governed by its rules of that society, interpreted, not by himself, but by the great majority of its members. This is admitted to be sound with respect to secular societies of all kinds; is it not sound also with regard to religious societies?

The question whether churches should have creeds, and whether Christian teachers should be required to conform to standards, is quite a different one, and one of great importance. There are Christians who hold that the Church requires no creed except the Bible, and there are, we see, Christian ministers who are even more broad than this; they would acknowledge as brethren men whose belief in the Bible itself is exceedingly loose and indefinite.

A LADY'S OPINION.

We did not need that any American citizen, man or woman, should tell us that the people of the United States do not approve of such conduct as that exhibited by Mr. Jay Ewing at the Vancouver Board of Trade banquet, but a friend has handed us a copy of "Kate Field's Washington," which expresses the general American opinion so vividly and so vigorously that we could not resist the temptation of placing it before our readers. Here it is. We may add that the signature at the end of the article is Kate Field:

"On the 30th of April Vancouver's Board of Trade gave a banquet, to which all the local causes were invited, including Mr. Jay Ewing, representative of the United States. After eating through the bill of fare, Mr. Ewing asserted his independence and general fitness for his position by declaring, according to press dispatches, that if the toast, 'Our Foreign Relations,' to which he, with other guests, was to respond, did not immediately follow the toast, 'To the Queen,' he would remove his injured honor from the festive board. Had I been chairman, I'd have permitted Mr. Ewing to carry down his threat, but John Bull is naturally a good fellow, and, for the sake of peace, Mr. Ewing was allowed to have his way."

"One would think that such a concession, at such a time, would have pleased the 'gentleman' from the United States. Not a bit of it. When the president propped 'Her Majesty,' and the band struck up 'God Save the Queen,' which all joined in singing—the redoubtable Ewing showed his gallantry by remaining seated! On being asked to explain such unseemly conduct, this ideal consul replied that, as representative of the United States, he recognized 'claim of Her Majesty!'"

"I leave it to American gentlemen to say whether such a boor-filly represents the country, and whether he is likely to advance our interests, even in the capacity of a commercial agent? As a social animal he has written himself down a genius, b-o-g. 'I wonder how many of Mr. Ewing's kind inflict themselves upon a much underpaid and unappreciated man, as Dr. Briggs' critic call this American bully a gentleman?'"

FROM THE DAILY COLONIST, J. LOCAL AND PROVINCIAL.

A Favorite Resort.

The Morton House, at Shawnigan, under its new proprietorship, is a favorite resort to even greater popularity than it has heretofore enjoyed. The well fitted for the accommodation of visitors, and the cuisine is first-class.

Prompts Replies.

Capt. J. G. Cox received a acknowledgment of the receipt of the association's protest against the war, this year, from Hon. C. J. D. yesterday. The minister also had at once forwarded the protest.

Passengers per Walla Walla.

The steamship Walla Walla, from San Francisco yesterday morning, following Victoria passengers of Miss H. Dickenson, Mr. A. D. R. Dunsuir, C. Richardson, and wife, W. Blake, L. H. Beck, Hancock, J. L. Nelson.

Public School Examinations.

The examinations for entrance into the schools have been closed. The High School examinations are going on, and those of the public schools will begin to-day. The scholars looking forward to the holidays are making arrangements for the summer.

Popular Excursions.

The Yosemite Saturday excursion, Westminister are becoming Westerners can leave when the excursion leaves on Saturday afternoon. The excursion is a pleasant and interesting one, and the scholars looking forward to the holidays are making arrangements for the summer.

The Alaska Trip.

So popular is the Alaska trip with excursionists, that it is regarded of 100 persons, who desire to go, are obliged, much to their disappointment, to be left behind, as others are already engaged.

For Outpost Duty.

It is the intention of the local corps to march out on an expedition to the city of Topeka, organized outpost duty, the alarm being given on Monday morning, so that the men can resume their ordinary duties without any delay.

To Arrange the Tour.

A meeting of the members of the tour will be held next Monday, to make preliminary arrangements for the holding of a grand reunion here this summer. Only about a hundred, and it is thought no more, can resume their ordinary duties without any delay.

Hotel Dallas.

Mr. W. Jensen's new hotel, at the corner of the city, is ready for opening about August. It will have accommodations for upwards of 100 guests, who are provided with every comfort and convenience. The hotel will be on the European plan, a first-class being connected with it. It will himself manage the house.

Property Investment.

An investment was made in property, yesterday, in P. property, who took one-half of the property in that thriving place, and it is thought no more, can resume their ordinary duties without any delay.

Big Real Estate Deal.

The Vine ranch, at Poddar, owned by, yesterday, to Lieutenant Parry, R.A., of England. The ranch is 700 acres, and is valued at \$20,000, cash. The sale was made by Messrs. R. & Co., through the Mr. H. E. Field. It is Lieutenant Parry's intention to erect a residence on the property, and make one of the most beautiful on the coast.

Young Men's Institute.

The members of the Young Men's Institute, Tacoma, Spokane, and Nanaimo, are holding a reunion in Seattle on the 14th of July. It is a reunion of members of the Victoria Young Men's Institute, who are even more broad than this; they would acknowledge as brethren men whose belief in the Bible itself is exceedingly loose and indefinite.

Post-Office Improvements.

Mr. Jonathan Bullen is at the direction of Mr. E. G. G. Masonry for a vault in the Post Office, which measures eleven feet. It is to be placed under the Postmaster's private residence, and is to be a vault in which has been obtained from British Columbia. The out-mansive one—has been recently placed in the vault. There is a vault, instead of a new safe, been provided, the entire vault to be replaced with a new one.

War Veterans.

The present being the time when returns require to be made, and the number of the American army pensioners numerous letters are being received from the old soldiers, and many of them are something like 25 to 30 years of age. In one case there is a considerable difficulty in the obtaining of the pension, and the applicant who resides up country, has been obliged to come to the city. He has been offered that he must, in default of a pension, go about 180 miles to the city, to secure the pension. His journey will be rather expensive, but it is to be expected that the pension will be equal to anything.