Twice-a-Week Times

Published every Tuesday and Friday by THE TIMES PRINTING & PUBLISHING CO., LIMITED.
JOHN NELSON,
Managing Director.
SUBSCRIPTION RATE.
By mail (exclusive of city).$1.00 per annum
DISPLAY RATES.
Per inch, per month $2.50
CLASSIFIED RATES.
One cent a word an issue. No advertisement less than 10 cents.
NOTE—A special rate is quoted where an advertisement is carried in both Daily and Twice-a-Week.

DAY V. CONTRACT LABOR.

There has been a great deal of talk on the streets lately in regard to the alleged excessive cost of civic works executed by day labor. Many persons who are absolutely unprejudiced in their judgment claim that the city has not been getting value for the money expended on most of the works of public improvement which have been executed during the past few years. There is only one way to dispose of this antagonism and to definitely determine whether the best and most economic results are achievable by day labor or by contract. The test must be applied if the people are to be satisfied. The city council ought therefore to have no hesitation in adopting a recommendation which has been made to have five miles of sidewalk constructed under contract as an experiment, subject to the usual conditions under which such contracts are awarded. Under the local improvement system the owners of property are charged with the larger proportion of the cost of such works, and as they pay the piper they ought to be provided with some convincing evidence of the fact that they are not being saddled with charges in excess of what would be the case if the business of the city were transacted in a business-like manner. The Times has always supported the day-labor system because it believed that all things considered it was the best and the most economical. But the best system may become the worst if looseness of method finds an abiding-place in it and the idea becomes general that in a civic job he is the most accomplished workman who does the least amount of work in a given time. That is undoubtedly the impression which has become current. It is the duty of the aldermen to have that impression removed or disproved.

FROM AN AMERICAN STANDPOINT

A Washington correspondent of one of the leading American papers describes the tariff deadlock between the two North American nations as productive of one of the gravest problems the Taft administration has yet encountered. This opinion is in line with that the Times pointed out on Saturday. Not perhaps that a nation of the tremendous natural wealth and unequalled trade, domestic and international, of the republic, would be seriously inconvenienced by a tariff war with Canada, but there is the political aspect of the matter to be considered, and that it is, doubtless, that is causing the president most concern and prevents him from treating Canada so cavalierly and disdainfully as his predecessors in office were wont to do. And Canadians would be less than human if they did not take some considerable amount of satisfaction out of the fact that their country, once despised and disdained by American statesmen, has assumed a position of recognized dignity and importance on this continent.

The solicitude of President Taft for an amicable arrangement of the tariff controversy proves to a demonstration that the traditional policy of the United States in respect of Canada has failed. There was a time when the United States markets absorbed most of our products. The McKinley and the Dingley tariffs changed all that, and for a time created something very closely approaching a panic on this side of the border. But the depression following the loss of the United States market did not break the Canadian spirit. We sought and found profitable markets elsewhere. These markets our government has succeeded in extending, and it is this tendency, apparently, the president of the United States indulges the vain hope of suppressing by application of the maximum tariff schedules provided for in the Payne-Aldrich measure.

But, as the correspondent referred to points out, it is no secret that Mr. Taft's tariff commissioners who recently visited Ottawa found the Canadian government, and to a still greater degree the Canadian people, in no unbending attitude. The commission, it is pointed out, went to Canada handicapped by the terms of the Payne Tariff Act, under which the only inducement they could offer Canada for the desired concessions from her was the suspension by presidential proclamation of the maximum rates. In return for this rather negative proposition the commission went to demand the removal of the Canadian export duties on pulp wood from crown lands, and substantially the low or intermediate tariff rates recently given French imports into Canada in return for similar favors from France.

"This proposition struck the Canadians as simply amusing. The Laurier government is willing to head off as much as possible the further imposition of export duties on shipments to the United States in return for favors from this country, but even that amount of friendly feeling on its part has already raised an outcry in Canada. The present export duties apply only to cuttings from the Crown lands, and the people, unless their government exacts good terms from us, will insist that these restrictions be extended to timber cut from private lands also.

"The political significance of the diplomatic and commercial crisis this situation develops is apparent at once when the importance and nature of the trade between this country and Canada are considered, and when it is remembered that even without the complications of this particular snarl the tariff question bids fair to count heavily against a Republican majority in the next House. This government must show its hand by April 1st, when, under the statute, the maximum rates will go into effect, unless Canada is exempted by special proclamation of the president. Almost immediately after that date the congressional campaign begins, and that campaign the Republican leaders are already viewing with alarm."

It is thought here (Washington), that the practical cessation of trade intercourse between the two countries would at once cause a tremendous uprising against the Taft Administration in all the border cities and in many other sections wherever industries are affected. Buffalo, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and many other cities are directly and vitally interested in this international exchange, and are already prepared to voice their wishes in no uncertain tone.

The commerce that is at stake in the negotiations now going on amount to an annual $280,000,000; $90,000,000 have the value of Canadian goods sold in the United States; $190,000,000 of American products sent to Canada.

"One of the most interesting phases of the pending difficulty is that should the higher rates be imposed, and a tariff war between this country and Canada begin, at least one important group of the losers by such a conflict will be made up of the men and interests who did most to secure the passage of the provisions of the tariff act under which the present situation has arisen.

"These men are the papermakers, and their loss will come from the fact that in Canada they have heavy holdings of pulp wood, which, in case of a trade war, they would not be able to use. In the crown lands of the Province of Quebec alone American interests have secured rights to the pulp wood on 12,000 square miles, while these holdings, combined with the improvements that have been already made with a view to getting this pulp wood out for use in the United States, represents an investment not far short of $15,000,000.

"The resentment the Canadians feel at American exactions in tariff matters, and the willingness on that ground to head off exports to the United States, has been greatly reinforced lately by the cry for conservation. This cry has been raised by Dr. Fernow—the Canadian Gifford Pinchot—and he has the backing of the newspapers, the manufacturers, and the people in demanding that Canadian forests be used only by Canadians, and that as great restrictions as possible be thrown around the foreign traffic in Canadian wood and wood products.

"Apparently, there are only three courses open to the Taft administration, and two of these are pretty much the same thing. One is a flat declaration of war on April 1st, with the imposition of our maximum. The next is the postponement of this imposition beyond that date, in the hope of gaining concessions, with the prospect ultimately of having to back down with as good grace as possible. The third is an immediate surrender, with the reopening of negotiations on a basis more reasonable than our present demands.

"Back of these alternatives, of course, is the final recourse to a reciprocity treaty. But from the viewpoint of the United States such a thing is almost an impossibility. It involves a repeal of a substantial part of the Payne Tariff Act, and that would mean the reopening of the whole tariff question. The tariff question may be reopened, but if it is done at the next Congress it will be started by a Democratic House."

THE MAYOR'S LETTER.

Mayor Morley in a curious and inconsequential letter to the press first points out a number of municipal matters which ought to be the subject of investigation, and then questions the propriety or the policy of any such investigation. His Worship instances the deficit of $23,000 incurred by the agricultural association, the shortage of $21,000 in connection with the James Bay Improvement By-law, the fiasco of the salt water protection system (which is likely to amount to $10,000 of an unanticipated liability, and is not acceptable to the city), and the scandal of the Smith's Hill reservoir (a work which cost, we believe, in the neighborhood of $90,000, and will be next to useless until a further amount of $30,000 has been expended in placing it in a condition to hold water.

The Mayor might have added considerably to his evidences of civic incompetency without exaggerating the facts in the slightest degree. He might have instanced the excessive cost to the ratepayers of every public work undertaken during the past few years. He might have explained that the reservoir and the salt water system are only singled out as examples in a large way of what is going on in almost every instance in a small way. He says everyone is anxious that the responsibility for the blundering should be placed, but deprecates the suggestion of an investigation by an independent tribunal because (1) the expense of a commission would be too great; (2) such an inquiry would indicate that the people of Victoria were incapable of self-government; (3) other cities have instituted reforms without incurring the expense of investigations by commissions.

As to the first objection, we submit that the case of the reservoir alone demonstrates that the cost of the investigation would be more than justified in one year by an exposure of loose methods of civic administration and the adoption of a more economical system in the expenditure of municipal moneys. In regard to the second the Mayor has himself admitted in public that the affairs of the city are not carried on in a business-like manner. He contends that the "system" has broken down. He does not recognize that possibly he himself may have some responsibility in the premises, but insinuates that the council is directly to blame and the people indirectly for electing a council of incompetents. Then His Worship uncorks the vials of his wisdom and oracularly remarks that the one thing necessary is for the people to "look the matter fairly in the face and exercise the same common sense in running the city that proves successful in private enterprises." Now all that is very impressive, but what does it mean? If the people "look the situation fairly in the face" they find that the present council is in power for the next nine months and they are confronted by the statement of the Mayor that this council does not exercise the same common sense in administering civic affairs that brings business success to private enterprises. It means, further, that while the present council remains in power no reforms in administration need be looked for. We are to mark time until the end of the year, when His Worship the Mayor will propose a reform in the "system" and if his ideas be adopted we shall have an administration corresponding to that which assures success in the conduct of private enterprises. Yet in the vast majority of cities in Canada and in all cities of the United Kingdom the "system" is practically the same as it is in Victoria, and in most of these municipalities business is conducted in a fairly business-like manner. It occurs to us, therefore, that possibly it is not the "system" that is at fault so much as the persons charged with the administration of the "system." That, we submit, is also a business "proposition."

The thing for the Mayor to do under the existing conditions would appear to be to stop dreaming of what might be accomplished under an idealistic "system" and endeavor, acting in cordial co-operation with the rest of the council, to make the best of the present system.

As to the third objection of the Mayor that other cities have instituted reforms without going to the expense of having independent investigations, that is true only in a qualified measure. Things went wrong in the city of Montreal recently, and an investigation was held which brought about far-reaching reforms. No one questions the necessity of an investigation in the case of Victoria. There is no doubt in the mind of any individual who has followed closely what has been going on during the last few years that there has been looseness, to use the mildest possible expression, in connection with the construction of nearly every municipal work of importance. The case of the reservoir is nothing short of a black scandal. The persons responsible for that abortion must be saddled with the responsibility. If they are not brought to account, our supineness will be looked upon as practically a warrant for the continuation of further jobbery of a like nature. No one believes that an investigation by the council would be anything but a screaming farce.

As for the objection that uncovering a scandal would give Victoria a "black eye" and be prejudicial in the eyes of the world, that is precisely what might be expected from the interests which desire a continuation of existing conditions. But it will not avail. An exposure of wrongdoing will be indicative of a desire for reform. It would be a thousand times more prejudicial to Victoria's good name and best interests to cover up a scandal than to lay it bare before the world.

SOWING SPRING WHEAT.

Calgary, March 19.—A report was received here to-day from H. Sorenson, of Strathmore, stating that he had started sowing spring wheat on the 16th. Sorenson only came from Denmark last spring, but his aggressive methods have given him exceptional returns from his venture. He expects to crop 1,280 acres this year.

People with red hair are, according to F. C. Shrubsall, M. D., usually a little shorter in stature than those with hair of less striking color. In the case of boys at the age of fourteen, the tallest are those with light brown hair. Red hair is easily last. With girls red hair comes a poor last.

CHEMICAL WORKER AND HIS CONTRACT

Interesting Case Being Heard To-day in the County Court

A most unusual and very interesting labor case is occupying Judge Lampman's attention in County court to-day. Thomas Strain, who was brought out from Scotland by the Victoria Chemical Company three years ago under contract, is suing the company for $108, being $100 retained from his wages and interest thereon. The company denies that it owes him anything, and claims $200 as balance due on travelling expenses and damage done.

D. S. Tait is acting for plaintiff and Lindley Crease for the defendant company.

Mr. Tait stated that his client, who was brought from Scotland on a contract for three years, signed in Scotland, had held back from his wages $100, according to the terms of the contract, to cover any damage he might do. Within three months of his contract time being up he was discharged and the return of his money refused.

The plaintiff identified the contract which he had signed before coming out, under which $4 a month was to be held back until $100 was in hand. On January 3rd he was discharged, and he had been unable to obtain the $100 since. He was a railway employee in the Old Country and began here as a laborer around the yard.

To Mr. Crease he admitted that his passage had been paid, and that on asking for it he got $2.50 a day from the start instead of the $2, the contract called for.

"You are not sorry you came out; it is a fine country to come to?" asked Mr. Crease.

"I have seen as fine countries," replied plaintiff.

"Of course I mean other than Scotland," Mr. Crease hastened to explain.

Plaintiff said he was discharged because the foreman thought him drunk. He had some liquor, but denied that he was drunk. The pipes through which the sulphuric acid passed were not broken, as was alleged by the company. He did all the firing of the three furnaces he had in charge on the night of January 3rd-4th last.

Plaintiff admitted to Judge Lampman that he felt sleepy when he went on duty on the evening of January 2nd, but "did not go to sleep altogether."

Edward Legg, foreman, explained the process of rectifying which Strain was in charge of. He said he had warned the man in regard to his drinking habits, and was so disgusted at the condition of things when he come on, the morning in question, that he told Strain to get off the works. The flow of acid had stopped and two of the pipes in the furnace were cracked. The result was a substantial shortage in the amount of acid produced, causing a weakenss in the nitric acid distilled from this and delaying a shipment to the Trail smelter.

Thomas H. Curdle, fireman, told of finding Strain sleeping at time during the night and firing his furnaces for him.

Fred Moore, president of the company, stated that they had brought out about ten men three years ago. He admitted to Mr. Tait that he possibly knew of the existence of the Master and Servant Act at the time, but these were skilled men. In Strain's case there had been paid out $147.25 to bring him here, and only $100 retained from his wages.

Mr. Legg, recalled, stated that one of the pipes broken had been in use eight days and another nine.

Mr. Tait argued that under the Master and Servant Act of 1899 contracts or agreements made with workmen before their migration to British Columbia were void as against the workmen, and so the company could not claim the right to hold the $100 back, no matter how negligent Strain might possibly have been. Defendants admitted that $100 had been retained, and they must pay him this.

Mr. Crease contended that the plaintiff had been brought in as a skilled workman, in which case the contract held good.

His Honor declined to be convinced that a two-dollar man could be understood to be an expert or a skilled man. "A book-keeper engaged by a solicitor in Ontario is not a solicitor when he gets to British Columbia," he remarked.

Further argument is being heard this afternoon.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

I entered the venerable abbey
With a hushed and noiseless tread,
For I had entered the kingly presence
Of Old England's mighty dead;
And the far-away voice of the organ
Came nearer and filled all space,
Till a grand, mighty rolling of music
Like a wave, passed through the place.

'Twas gone, and I stood, and I breathed once more,
And the windows told their tale;
While the eloquent stone from master hand
Was shaped, and they lived again.
A warrior here, and a martyr there,
With poet, statesman and King,
And crowning them all was the gentle thought
Of a tear, and an angel wing.

On the banks of the mighty Thames stands,
A relic of Saxon times,
Where, with bended knee and a softened heart
The people have prayed betimes;
You ask, where the scroll of Fame is writ?
Who of England's glory tell?
And the Abbey, grey with its years, says "I."
I gathered them as they fell.

I. Y. MARGISON.

Sooke, B. C.

DUNNVILLE CENTENARIAN.

Dunnville, March 18.—Mrs. Margaret Kenny, of this town, celebrated her 100th birthday. She was born in Ireland, and his lived at Dunnville for 67 years. In honor of the occasion the high mass of thanksgiving was sung in St. Michael's church by Rev. Father Donovan. In the afternoon the business men of the town, headed by a band, marched to the old lady's home, where an address was read to her.

DAVID SPENCER, LIMITED

A Wonderful Display of Everything Desired in Spring Millinery

The fascinating display of Beautiful Spring Millinery continues, with the addition of hundreds of new models received during the past week. Skilful adaptations of the best foreign creations and hundreds of beautiful, original designs from our own workshops are to be seen at prices as pleasing as the styles. So splendid are the values, so enormous the selection, that those who come merely to look, stay to buy. Nothing that women are even thinking about in Millinery is lacking here, from the immense, wide, trimmed, picture hats from Paris to the most modest morning toques. Popular-priced hats are represented in hundreds of trimmed hats, while tables piled high with hat shapes and other tables on which are arranged thousands of bunches of flowers of every description make a happy hunting ground for women who want something distinctive—something of an individuality in fine millinery. Yesterday, we received and placed on display a large shipment of Outing Hats. These are principally straws, trimmed in nearly every shade desired, and priced at prices from 50c to $9.00.

Untrimmed Shapes from $1.75 up. Trimmed Dress Hats from $5.00 to $50.

Few, if any corsets, except the Bon Ton, are worthy of comparison with such ideals of health, beauty and symmetry as the Three Graces.

The illustration portrays three views of an exquisite Bon Ton creation, modelled upon extreme lines fully in accord with the latest edict of fashion. Appropriate as the correct foundation of gowns for any occasion and especially for the new snug-fitting costumes of this season. The elastic gores and unboned skirt are noteworthy features. Prices, $7.50 to **$9.00**

Easter is Only a Few Days Away

But You Will Find Us Fully Prepared With An Immense Stock of Suits, Coats and Gowns.

With Easter only a few days away, our showing of new spring effects will be sure to interest you. Smart patterns in popular shades are displayed, styles that are imported direct from fashion's creators, which have that touch of individuality that you are looking for, tailored suit satisfaction in its highest and truest sense is assured here, no matter what price you pay. We cannot too strongly emphasize our unusual facilities for affording the most complete and lasting tailored suit satisfaction, whatever your requirements and however exacting, Fashion has designated so many radical changes and departures that suits must be correct. Fashion's every call is met with all satisfying style and quality response here. Prices from $20.00 to **$75.00**

TUESDAY'S LEADER IN WALLPAPER

Tuesday we are placing 400 rolls of splendid Wall Paper on sale. These are in a number of very dainty and pretty designs in gold, cream and tapestry effects at, per single roll ..... **15¢**

The Spring's Latest Novelties in Belts

A most exquisite showing of Ladies' Belts is now to be seen at Spencer's, and a large one it is, too. It is one which the most discriminating person in the world can be satisfied from. These new belts are decidedly attractive. A specially pretty assortment is to be seen in the New Grecian designs. These are in a number of beautiful tints, with large brass buckles. A great number which are adorned with copies of pictures taken from famous paintings. Prices range from $1.75 to ..... **75¢**

Buy a Suit That Fits You

You may think it strange that we advise you against buying a suit which does not fit you as it should. But we know the disappointment and depressing effect of ill-fitting garments. We carry very carefully made clothing that is intended to and will fit perfectly if you select the proper size and cut. Even the lowest priced of our suits have the benfit of a great deal of hand-tailoring, while the higher priced ones are **hand-tailored throughout.** Such garments are not made to fit just so-so, but will lie across the shoulders without a wrinkle, the collar will fit properly and snugly, the coat and trousers will hang in smooth, graceful lines, because coat, vest and trousers are correctly tailored.

The pattern is not the most important thing about the suit you will wear constantly the next few months. Some suits will never feel right on you no matter how much you may like the patterns—they were never intended for your build.

We have garments in stock for all types of men—remember that when you start to look for a spring suit. And when you come in we will lay out garments in the new patterns for your inspection which will seem to have been made especially to your order when you try them on.

There's a **Satisfaction** about such suits not measured entirely by their cost.

A great many men think these garments are underpriced for the value they get out of them. Let us show them to you to-morrow—you'll be under no obligation to buy if they don't strike you that way—**$15.00 to $30.00.**

B. B. B. Stands for Burdock Blood Bitters

A Well Known and Reliable Spring Tonic and Blood Purifier. We sell the $1 size for 75¢

We also sell various other Spring remedies at low price, viz.:

HOOD'S SARSAPARILLA, $1 size for **90¢**
BEST SARSAPARILLA, with iodide of potassium, $1 size for ..... **75¢**
BURDOCK AND SARSAPARILLA EXTRACT, $1 size for ..... **75¢**
AYRE'S SARSAPARILLA, $1 size ... **90¢**
ENOS' FRUIT SALT, $1 size for ..... **75¢**
HEALTH SALT, 75c size for ..... **50¢**
PAINE'S CELERY COMPOUND, $1 size for ..... **90¢**

Our Patent Medicine Department Saves Money for You.