

Publishing Office:  
1100 Bute St., Vancouver, B.C.  
Telephone:  
Seymour 6048



D. A. CHALMERS  
Managing Editor and Publisher  
With an Advisory Editorial  
Committee of Literary  
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THE TWENTIETH CENTURY SPECTATOR OF BRITAIN'S FARTHEST WEST  
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"BE BRITISH," COLUMBIANS!

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## Educational Notes

(By Spectator)

A spirit of steadily rising optimism once more pervades the atmosphere of business life in Vancouver. The rapidly increasing commerce of the port, and the present very active preparations for still greater expansion in the immediate future, might of itself be sufficient to explain this optimism. But further grounds can easily be cited. The erection of new business blocks, the sight of apartment houses, large and small, in all stages of building progress, and the constant appearance of new individual dwelling-houses in every part of the city, proves that capitalists have faith that the wants of a largely increased population will soon have to be met.

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It is the duty of public bodies to read these signs of the times, and to act accordingly. Hence the consideration given by the city council to street improvement, sewerage and water problems. Hence the forward movement of the B. C. Electric Company in regard to questions of transportation, lighting and heating. Hence the submission of money by-laws by the School Board to provide adequate accommodation for the present school population and the new battalions of boys and girls about to demand admission to our classrooms.

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It is ten or twelve years since the ratepayers voted approval of any expenditure on school capital account, and during this time the enrollment of pupils has increased by fifty per cent. Fortunately, before the date mentioned, provision had been made in advance for increase in school population, and many vacant classrooms awaited the coming of new pupils and teachers. These vacant classrooms have all been filled; boys and girls have been crowded into attics and basements, regardless of the menace to health or the danger from fire: grounds needed for play have been cluttered up with temporary one-room buildings leading to class isolation and the overtaxing of sanitary accommodation; the half-time system has been adopted for classes of beginners, to the great detriment of their physical and mental progress.

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Once more the school board has made appeal for a modest sum on capital account that it might begin to remedy the evils now existing, and prevent their aggravation in time to come. Every ratepayer, whether or not he has children of his own, might well have held it his duty and his privilege to vote in favor of the by-laws. The annual charge for sinking-fund and interest would scarcely have been felt in a day's expenditure by the ordinary taxpayer.

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In casting the ballot no true man or woman should permit sectional or narrowly selfish interest to actuate him. Even had the by-laws passed, it is obvious that increased accommodation in every district of the city could not be provided in a single year. The various districts should have their needs attended to in turn, those most congested being first served.

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It must be noted, to, that the school board had no thought of establishing a new high school. The new high school building, for which money was asked, is needed to house the pupils

of the King George high school, since the building on the Dawson school grounds, at present occupied by them, is required for the increasing numbers of primary pupils, and for the use of the Junior high school.

We hear a great deal on every side about the duty we owe to advertise the attractions of our city. No form of advertising is more effective than a sufficient number of proper buildings in which to educate the children of the people whom we are inviting to make their homes with us. We can only hope that before another vote is called for a larger number of the citizens will be awake to the conditions and the clamant need for action.

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To influence the individual voter in the recent election the respective parties were dependent on organization, and made free use of publicity on the platform, in the press, and, not least, on the every voter canvass.

Vancouver ratepayers have also been confronted with the submission to them of another issue, viz., the passing of by-laws to raise money to increase our present inadequate school accommodation. The result has been disappointing—to say the least. To secure the passage of these by-laws next time the promoters might well take a leaf from the book of the politicians. Organization is already to hand in the numerous Parent-Teachers' associations in the city. In past by-law campaigns they have labored with enthusiasm, but without the required measure of success. One means they have never tried,—the every voter canvass. With so many branch associations, and so many members in each branch, the task should be far from insuperable. The success of their efforts might well astonish even themselves.

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The efforts of the Vancouver School Board and of many other bodies to induce the provincial government to arrange for an educational survey of the province have at last borne fruit. Through the Superintendent of Education the government announced that the survey would be carried out. No fair-minded person will seek to deny that our present educational system is a good one, or that our teachers are doing effective work. That is not the question. With people truly progressive "the good" must not be permitted to stand in the way of "the better."

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The following passage, clipped from the "Argonaut," was recently published in the Vancouver "Province:"

"This is the only country in the world where men won't teach boys," declared Archbishop Hanna, speaking in New York. Here he touches a fundamental truth, and emphasizes a crying need. We have all but abandoned education, applied to the more formative years, to women. Men don't or won't teach boys. The need of boyhood is to be inspired by the qualities that imply manhood. Womanly ideals, fine as they are, are representative not of the spirit of manhood but the spirit of womanhood. Our country wants womanly spirit where it belongs: it ought not to raise up a race of femininely inspired men. Every thinking man knows this; few have had the judgment to see or the courage to declare it."

As a matter of truth men are not abandoning the teaching