

# The Colonist.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28, 1891.

## AN ANXIOUS TIME.

The farmers of Manitoba and other parts of the Northwest, have had a very anxious time of it lately. Their crops grew luxuriantly. The wheat was doing beautifully. Everything gave promise of an abundant harvest. But the farmer, though greatly encouraged, was almost afraid to hope. The bright prospect might be darkened and his hopes blasted in a single night. If the frost—the killing frost—came, he would be a ruined man. And the frost might come at any time and rob him of the fruits of a year's labor. The Winnipeg papers of the 22nd inst. show how great the suspense and the anxiety were. The previous evening was chilly, and it was feared that there would be frost before morning. The thermometer was anxiously watched. At Winnipeg, in the evening, the mercury showed 51° and it rapidly fell to 44°. There was little sleep for many that night, even in Winnipeg. The mercury in the glass lowered gradually until at 3.30 it was down to 41°, and there it stopped until after sunrise. The telegraph was busy during the whole of the night giving information relative to the temperature in the different districts. At one place it was 44°, at another 42°, at a third the mercury was down to 36°, and at a fourth it was so seriously near the freezing point as 34°, but nowhere was there any record of frost. So, in the morning, a weight was lifted from many hearts, and thousands rendered sincere thanks to the Lord of the Harvest. The danger from frost is pretty well over in Manitoba and the Territories by this time. Harvesting had commenced on the 22nd in many places. At Prince Albert, the farmers were cutting their grain and were well pleased with the yield, both as to quantity and quality. In other places wheat-cutting was going on. Even as far north as Edmonton, farmers were cutting their barley and their wheat.

## SECOND-HAND ABUSE.

Is the Times either fair or consistent when it quotes the strictures of the Ottawa Free Press on the course taken by the British Columbia members when the claims of the squatters came up for discussion, in the House of Commons, though it did not itself say a single word about the validity of those claims? The Free Press, as every one in the East knows, is not the most scrupulous paper in the world, and it does not possess sufficient information on the subject to be able to form an intelligent opinion as to whether the squatters on the railway lands have a grievance or not. The Times, it may be presumed, has made some enquiry into this British Columbia subject, and is, or ought to be, in a position to give an opinion on its merits. But when British Columbians were informed by our Ottawa correspondent about the way in which Mr. Laurier's motion was discussed, and the result of the division upon it, it had not a single word to say either in favor of the squatters or in condemnation of the men who spoke and voted against the resolution. But now, it quotes with approval, abuse which it had not the courage or the impudence to say for itself. If believe that the squatters have no case, and that they have been fairly dealt with by the Government, it is doing what is altogether unprincipled in adopting the censure of the Ottawa Free Press; if it believes that the squatters have the law on their side, and that they have been unjustly treated by the Government, why was it as dumb as an oyster when the matter came up for discussion? It is so fond of abuse that it gives it to its readers second-hand, even when it knows that it is undeserved?

## ON THE WRONG TRACK.

Our contemporary has at last found that the School Trustees have no power to investigate and decide upon the matters in dispute between the Superintendent of Education and the Principal of the High School, yet it approves of the Trustees taking action in a matter which is outside their jurisdiction. As it expresses itself on the subject in a rather peculiar manner, we will quote its own words:—

"The trustees have found that the School Act, under the manipulation of Honorable John, was so framed as to block the way to a thorough investigation and the application of a remedy. It was under these circumstances that they, last evening, resolved to look into the matter as far as they could, and do all in their power to rectify the state of affairs."

If the Times means by this that it is of the opinion that the Legislature has so framed the School Act as to block a thorough investigation into the matters relating to schools and into the peculiar matter which it has under consideration, it labors under a very strong delusion. The Council of Instruction has power not only to review the decisions of the Trustees, but to make provision to meet exigencies occurring under the operation of the School Act. It has, therefore, ample authority to investigate the disputes that may arise between the Superintendent and any teacher, and it, in fact, is the teacher's court of last resort, so to speak. To say, therefore, that the School Act has been so framed as to block the way to a thorough investigation into any matter connected with the public schools, is to say what is not true. Such an assertion is certain to lead those who have any faith in the legal knowledge, and we must add, the common sense of the organ of the Opposition, astray.

It would, indeed, be singular, if the law made the Superintendent of Education absolute master in all matters relating to the public schools, and left no place for an appeal from his decision. Those, there-

fore, who complain of the Superintendent, of the Council of Instruction, and of the Government, with respect to the Principal of the High School's complaint, are not entitled to the sympathy of fair-minded people. The first thing that anyone who wishes to get redress for an alleged injury inflicted by a subordinate should do, is to appeal to that subordinate's official superior. Until he does this, there is no sense in carrying his complaint either to those who have no authority in the premises, or to the general public. It is evident that the Times sees this clearly enough, for, in order to find an excuse for taking up the matter, it has to assert that, under the School Law, the Principal of the High School cannot get his complaint investigated or his grievance redressed. This, as we have said before, is not true. The Council of Instruction, and not the Board of Trustees, is obviously the proper authority to hear Mr. McLeod's complaint, and to provide a remedy for the injury inflicted on him and on the pupils of his school, if they have been injured. Why does not the Times advise Mr. McLeod to give that body a chance to hear what he has to say and to enquire into the treatment he has received at the hands of the Superintendent of Education?

## A TERRIBLE OFFENCE.

The Times, in its issue of Tuesday, again attacks Mr. McConnon. It labors hard to create the impression that he is a very important person, for whose existence it is extremely difficult to give a reason. If this is the case, why does the Times make that gentleman the subject of leading articles? Surely the organ of the Opposition has more respect for itself, its party and its readers than to waste its space in discussing men and things that are of no public importance. If Mr. McConnon is the kind of man that the organ wishes the public to believe him to be, what he says and does can be of no kind of consequence to any one. The journal that magnifies trifles and makes a great ado about what it admits to be nothing, or next to nothing, confesses itself to be both small-minded and frivolous. But this is not the only instance in which the acts of our contemporary do not correspond with its words.

And what great offence has Mr. McConnon committed to bring upon his unfortunate head the thunderbolts of the Times? He, at the last meeting of the Trustees, it appears, signified his intention to enquire into "the qualifications of all the teachers of the High School." This is the awful announcement which it took the Times more than half a column of high-pressure editorial to prepare its readers for. We fail to see anything fearfully significant or dreadfully portentous in this notice of Mr. McConnon's intention. We are quite sure that none of the teachers of the High School need feel in the slightest degree nervous at the prospect of such an enquiry. They have before this gone through a much more trying ordeal than, any which the Trustees can ask them to face. The Government Examiners enquired pretty closely into their qualifications, and, since they were satisfied, we do not think that the enquiry which the Trustees may institute should cause any of them a single moment's uneasiness. Why the Times should make so a great a fuss about so simple and so harmless a matter, passes our comprehension.

The teachers, we are quite sure, will court enquiry into their qualifications, as they have always done into the results of their work. And this, after all, is the best kind of enquiry into a teacher's qualification. The answer to the question, what kind of work has he or she done? will give the very best proof of the teacher's qualification that can possibly be produced. It is very often happens that the work of teachers whose scholastic attainments have been shown by examination to be high, is very bad indeed, and, on the other hand, candidates whose examination papers did not promise much, have turned out to be excellent teachers. The ability to teach does not always go with the capacity to learn. But this, by the way, we have not the slightest reason to believe that any one of the High School teachers is not fully qualified to teach every thing required by his or her position. However, if Mr. Connon thinks differently, there is no harm in the world, but rather the reverse, in his making the most searching enquiry he can devise into the qualifications of all the teachers. He may have been wrongly informed by prejudiced persons as to the professional qualifications of the teachers, and if this is the case, it is his duty, occupying the position that he does, to satisfy himself as to the accuracy of his information. We really do not think that such an intelligent and, indeed, praiseworthy curiosity, as Mr. McConnon has displayed in this matter, can be adduced as a proof of the total depravity of human nature.

## EDITORIAL COMMENT.

QUEEN VICTORIA has now the opportunity of seeing an agrarian row at almost her own door. Farquharson is Her Majesty's nearest neighbor, at Breemar. The path to the points from which landlord Farquharson would exclude the public passes through the grounds of Belmont Castle. The Queen does not object to the intrusion on her privacy, or to the invasion of her property by the sight-seeing public, but the self-asserting proprietor considers himself on ground which he believes to be his own, greater than the Queen of the Realm, and forbids what she allows. The people see and appreciate the contrast, and they seem determined to teach the overbearing and exclusive commoner a lesson. They believe that they have a legal as well as an equitable right to the thoroughfare, and they are bound not to be bullied out of it by the landlord. It would be interesting to know what Her Majesty thinks of the contest.

## VICTORIA'S NEEDS.

Speech by Lieutenant-General Prior in the House of Commons, August 19th.

An Urgent Plea for More Liberal Treatment—The Old Pioneers Defended.

MR. PRIOR: Before you leave the chair, Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a few remarks, not, perhaps, of great national importance, but of great importance to the constituency I represent. The object I have in view is to try and show this House, and more especially the members of the Government, the necessity that exists for dealing more fairly and liberally with the city of Victoria, of which I have the honor to be one of the representatives. If the House will bear with me for a little time, I will endeavor to show the reasons which oblige me to say that the dissatisfaction which exists among my constituents is well-founded. I have here some figures which will show more forcibly than anything I can say what the facts are, and, though they may be dry, as figures generally are, I hope that the hon. gentlemen who have the welfare of the Dominion, and, therefore, the welfare of British Columbia, at heart, will take some interest in them. I will open my remarks by referring to the fact that the constituency of Victoria, that being the constituency I represent, but I hope also to be able to show that British Columbia as a whole deserves the attention of the Government, and that the Government should not overlook, as I fear they have done, to a certain extent, heretofore. I am glad to say that, notwithstanding the utterances of some of the members of the Opposition, and some of the very large penny that can get on them, that our mechanics are ground down by heavy taxation, and that the Government is overhauling the country north of the parallel, a pill which is likely to descend upon us at any moment, and engulf us in ruin and destruction—notwithstanding these assertions, which I believe are not borne out by facts or figures, I am glad to be able to tell the House that British Columbia as a whole, and Victoria in particular, are flourishing exceedingly. Owing to the progressive and rapid growth of the Dominion, and the fact that the Government has been pursuing a policy of expansion, we in British Columbia are now joined to our eastern provinces by the hands of the Canadian Pacific Railway. With the advent of this great work, our numbers of prosperity commenced in British Columbia which I am not afraid to prophesy will not only continue but will increase by leaps and bounds so long as the Government pursues its policy of expansion, and the protection it has given to those in the older provinces of this Dominion. I have here some figures that I think will give to this House some idea of the great extent of progress. I find that the exports from British Columbia of lumber in 1886 amounted to the sum of \$191,448. In the year ending June, 1890, they had risen to \$229,382. For export alone, but there is a tremendously large trade already developed and increasing. I am happy to say, with the eastern provinces of this Dominion. We are now in a position to export as much as New Brunswick. We are shipping large quantities of our timber to Colborne, where Mr. Crossen uses it for making railway ties, and also to the States of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Mr. Van Horne, the President of the Canadian Pacific Railway, is using British Columbia timber in the new house he is erecting in Montreal, which I think is a great compliment to the quality of our timber. I find, also, that the exports of fish in 1886 amounted to \$643,052; and for the year ending 30th June, 1890, they have risen to the sum of \$2,747,171. I find that our whole exports of coal in 1886 amounted to \$275,195, and they have risen in 1890 to \$2,376,770. Sir, if the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright) has done me the honor to refer to my speech in the House, he must admit that there is still a little to hope for from at least one of the shreds and patches of this Dominion. Sir, let me give the House a few figures to show the commercial importance of the city of Victoria as a port and as a distributing point. I find that the duty collected in the Victoria Customs-house for the year ending June 30th, 1890, amounted to \$229,382. I find that the duties collected from Customs in the whole of British Columbia, amounted to \$1,357,305 65; so we see that the goods that passed through the hands of the Victoria merchants paid over 70 per cent. of the amount of Customs levied in that province by my hon. friend the Minister of Customs. Besides this, the Minister of Inland Revenue collected a sum of \$149,412 in duties on imports during the year ending June 30th, 1890. Under the Customs Act \$107,000 were collected; so we find that the total revenue collected in British Columbia, a province with only a small population, was \$1,684,017. I find the exports for the year ending June 30th, 1890, from the city of Victoria, amounted to \$3,143,289; while the imports for home consumption for the same period, amounted to \$3,215,559. The exports for the whole of British Columbia, during the same period, were \$5,763,487; and the imports for home consumption for the whole of British Columbia, during the same period, were \$5,763,487. I find, therefore, that we see that Victoria had the honor of doing 54 per cent. of the export trade, and 75 per cent. of the import trade. Now, as the total exports of British Columbia in the year 1886 were \$2,953,616, and the total exports for the year ending 30th June, 1890, were \$5,763,487, we find that our exports from the province of British Columbia, in four years have risen 95 per cent. Sir, I find the total tonnage entering the port of Victoria for the year ending June, 1890, of sea-going vessels, was 662,217 tons, and of coasting vessels, 627,304 tons, making a total of 1,289,521 tons. So I think I have proved that Victoria has a right to claim to be a port of importance in the Dominion. Now, Sir, I am glad to say that all this business is done in a most orderly and business-like manner, and that the people of Victoria and of British Columbia without leaving some profits. I find that on 30th June, 1890, there were 1,289,521 tons of goods in the Victoria Customs-house, and the total value of the goods was \$1,155,118, thus showing the healthy financial condition of the class of people, who usually put their savings into their savings banks. I am perfectly aware that that sum is not as large as it was a year or so ago, but that is not on account of trade having fallen off, or on account of hard times in the province, but it is due chiefly to the action taken by the Minister of Finance in lowering the rate of interest from four to three per cent. I find that in the chartered banks on that date, there was deposited by the people, outside of the Government deposits, the sum of \$2,788,271. I find that the post office revenue of Victoria has risen from \$23,756 in 1887, to \$36,543 in the year ending 30th June, 1891. I may state, also, that the assessed value of the city is over \$17,000,000, and this year

there will be some \$1,500,000 worth of new building erected in this city. Now, I think I can challenge any hon. gentleman in the House to show me any other city in Canada, or in the United States, with the same population as Victoria, that presents a more flourishing condition, or that is on a more prosperous and a more financially sound basis, than the city I have the honor to represent. I believe the census will show that the farming lands of British Columbia are being rapidly taken up, and I am informed on very good authority that next year enough grain will be grown in that province, not only to supply the demand for home consumption, but that there will be a little left for export. One of our most important industries, the sealing industry, has, I am sorry to say, this year had a very grave set-back, owing to the arrangements that have been made between the Imperial Government and the United States Government closing Behring's Sea. That is an industry in which I have a great interest, and I am sorry to say that the sealing industry has been almost entirely stopped, and that the sealing industry was stopped so soon; but, even before it was stopped, seals had been caught worth, in the aggregate, over \$400,000. It is very easy to see what a large sum of money would have been brought into the province if the people had been allowed to pursue their occupation during the sealing season. Whilst on this subject, I would like to refer to the fact that the sealers of British Columbia are sincerely grateful to him for the ability and the zeal he has shown in working up their claims, and that they are very anxious to see the Government; and whatever may be the opinion of sealers in regard to the outcome of the negotiations between the Imperial Government and the United States Government, especially in regard to sending up the commission, at so late a period, to the Hon. 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