School Children Home for Christmas.

Interesting Features of the Day Before the Holidays—Winners of Competitive Drill Flag and the Governor-General's Medals.

(From Saturday's Daily Edition.)

That Britain has another generation of true-hearted Canadians growing to active manhood and womanhood, who will be ready to bear their parts when the time comes in sharing the responsibilities and dangers of the Empire, was amply evidenced at the closing of the city schools yesterday—patriotism being the keynote of the interesting exercises everywhere, and the stirring martial poetry of the nation, together with expressions of affection for the grand old flag, being important features of the programmes in all cases. The new rule providing for annual, instead of semi-annual, examinations, having come into force, the customary voluminous promotion lists were not in evidence, and the closing exercises consisted in the main of illustrations of the practical work of the school rooms, supplemented with readings, recitations and vocal music by the pupils, all of whom entered into the proceedings with zest and evident enjoyment. The practical work of the schools proved especially interesting to the assembled parents and friends of education, much encouragement to the devoted instructors being thereby afforded. Nor was the physical drill, a most important factor in the education of the men and women of a few years hence, in any way neglected, the improved general carriage of themselves by the young people since Mr. St. Clair has been entrusted with their physical education, exciting very general and most favorable comment. The closing exercises proper were held at all the schools simultaneously, while at the North Ward an excellent programme of a literary and musical character was presented during the afternoon, and the High school students also re-assembled in the afternoon, for the presentation by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, of the Governor-General's medals, the award of the handsome flag presented by Ald. Hayward for competition in drill, and an instructive address by Hon. Abraham E. Smith, the resident consul of the United States. More particular reference to the proceedings at the various schools is given hereunder; and the public will no doubt echo the seasonable wish expressed by all the speakers of the busy day—that the children will enjoy their holidays and "return with renewed health and vigor for the duties of the coming term."

AT THE HIGH SCHOOL.

Captain McMicking's Drill Company Takes the Flag—The Governor-General's Medals.

Punctually at 2 o'clock the Lieutenant-Governor and Hon. Abraham E. Smith, resident consul of the United States, entered the Pemberton gymnasium through an aisle of standing High school students, who sang "God Save the Queen" as His Honor advanced to his place, under a portrait of Her Majesty draped on either side with the flags of Britain and the United States. Mr. Russell then played the "Star Spangled Banner"; after which Mr. Paul, the principal, read the list of promotions from the fourth to the third division, and from the third to the second division, no promotions being made at Christmas from the second to the first division. The fortunate scholars are:

From Division III. to Division II. (in order of standing)—Miss Elizabeth Bryce, Miss Marion Offerhaus, Miss Olive Preston, Miss Kristina Johnston, Miss Ruth Ford, Forrest Pooler, Miss Sophie Hiscocks, Miss Christina Murray, Miss Joenina Johnston, Jerrald Potts, Miss Winnie Johnston, Miss Catherine Lorell, Herbert Leiser, Miss Ellen Somerville, Sydney Powell and Miss Amy Wilson.

From Division IV. to Division III.—Miss Strachan, was first in order of merit and Miss Noble second. The following are the promotions: Master Anderton, Miss Black, Miss Campbell, Miss Carlyon, Miss Dunn, Miss Few, Miss Glover, Miss Goddard, Master C. Gallaway, Master J. Gallaway, Master Gibson, Miss Harris, Miss Holt, Master McArthur, Miss Noble, Master Russell, Miss Sellick, Master S. Shanks, Miss Shields, Miss Strachan, Miss Sweet, Master Sweetland, Miss Wilson, Master Word and Miss Watson.

The programme of the day, which was read by Mr. Paul, number by number, was most satisfactorily carried out as follows:

Song—"The Maple Leaf"....
Presentation of medals and Principal's Prize.
Remarks of Principal Paul on the nature of the drill competition.
Presentation of flag and badges; and prize for single-stick.
Song—"Rule Britannia"....
Addresses.
"God Save the Queen."

The medals are the medals presented by His Excellency the Governor-General, one of silver, for the pupils of the High school, won by Miss Fanny Forbes Whyte; and the other, a bronze medal, won in a competition among the pupils of the public schools in this city at the annual examination for entrance to the High school, which was won by Miss May Pew, a pupil of the North Ward school taught by Mr. Principal McNeill, two of whose pupils had the distinction of heading the list last midsummer.

The flag was presented by Ald. Hayward for competition in drill among the four companies of the High school, as hereunder:

No. 1 Company—Miss Crawford, captain.
No. 2 Company—Miss Harris, captain.
No. 3 Company—Mr. Edgar McMicking, captain.
No. 4 Company—Mr. Samuel Shanks, captain.

These companies have been practising for this competition during the whole term, with excellent results as will be seen from the accompanying report of Capt. Clive Phillipps-Wolley, who kindly acted as judge. The flag is to be competed for at the end of each term, the names of the commanders of the successful companies being engraved on a brass plate on the staff. Capt. Clive Phillipps-Wolley in his report of award yesterday said:

"The four companies went through their evolutions extremely well, all four showing that they had been carefully drilled by a man who knew his work. Mr. St. Clair is to be warmly congratulated on the excellent results of his instruction. It is not too much to say, though the judge was not a bachelor, that the girls were individually as smart as the boys, but the effect of a smart word of command from the company officer was very apparent and practically decided the competition. Mr. McMicking handled his little company, which I consider entitled to the flag, extremely well, and it is only to be regretted that he is not commanding a good sized cadet corps, for which there appears to be excellent material in the school. Would it not be well to let the girls have a calisthenic competition? As far as I could judge from the very pretty figures which Miss Crawford and Miss Harris put their companies through, the boys would have no chance in a competition of this kind."

In presenting the medal, His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor alluded to the size and glory of the Empire and to the just and righteous war in which Britain is at present engaged, and from which he predicted would emerge with honor and victory; he urged the students to love their country and the flag that represented so much that was good and noble. He also made a graceful allusion to the friendship existing between Britain and the United States.

The United States consul, Hon. Abraham E. Smith, in presenting the flag in the name of Mrs. Hayward, who was present and who handed it to the successful captain, Mr. McMicking, gave a most interesting and instructive address, telling the boys and girls to be proud of their country and its flag, and impressing on them the necessity of doing their work with all their might if they wished to get on in life.

Mr. McMicking, chairman of the board of school trustees, followed, and in an excellent address referred to the improvement in the High School building; but hoped that the time was not far distant when a new edifice would be provided more suitable to a flourishing city like Victoria.

Mr. Eaton closed the speeches by emphasizing Mr. McMicking's remarks as to the necessity for a new school, and remarking that no city in the United States of the size of Victoria had so poor accommodation for its High school, and that the United States no doubt owed much of its present greatness to its excellent educational facilities. He ended with an allusion to the object lesson afforded by the banners of Britain and the United States hanging side by side on the wall, and the representatives of Her Majesty and of the United States sitting side by side under these flags.

Mrs. Hayward in a few well chosen words presented a prize given by the principal to Miss Whyte, and gracefully handed the flag, presented by Mr. Hayward, to Mr. McMicking; she also decorated each member of the company with ribbon of the school's colors.

A medal presented by Mr. Arthur Netherby, a former pupil, for single stick competition, also judged by Capt. Clive Phillipps-Wolley, was awarded to Mr. Fred Peters, of the first division.

Nor must mention be omitted of the pleasant fact that before leaving, the third division presented to Mr. Russell, their popular and painstaking teacher, a pocketbook, on the clasp of which his initials were engraved.

The thanks of the principal, teachers and pupils of the High school are due to His Honor, Hon. Mr. Smith, and the other visitors who braved a most inclement day to be present on this occasion; also to Ald. Hayward for his valuable and patriotic gift, and to Capt. Clive Phillipps-Wolley, who so kindly and patiently acted as judge of the competition.

The very interesting class examinations at the High school, which were held in the morning, were arranged as follows:

Division I—Principal Paul, Latin; Miss Watson, English literature.
Division II—Mr. Russell, Latin; Principal Paul, geometry.
Division III—Mr. Russell, algebra; Mr. Pineo, book-keeping.
Division IV—Mr. Russell, geometry; Miss Watson, French.

Miss Watson also gave an excellent and practical lesson in colloquial French.

CENTRAL SCHOOL CLOSING.

Pleasing Programmes by Both Boys and Girls—Decorations Atone For Barren Walls.

In the Boys' and Girls' Central schools the exercises in the morning were, as in other departments, chiefly in relation to actual school work. The boys, whose class rooms ordinarily are the reverse of cheerful or well lighted, took it upon themselves to cover the barren walls with a mass of tastefully designed and effectively carried out decorations, the general treatment of the class rooms in holly, ivy, berries and banners being so much of an artistic success as to provoke involuntary and enthusiastic expressions of admiration from each and all.

Until 11 o'clock the exercises were in no way apart or different from the regular work of the various classes, parents and other visitors being afforded an opportunity of seeing just how their little folk are instructed in the groundwork of a useful education. At 11 came an adjournment to the assembly room, where the appended programme was admirably carried out, the recitations being an exceptionally meritorious feature of the scholars' programme of entertainment. The singing, too, was highly pleasing, and exemplified great care and attention, not only on the part of the youthful vocalists, but by Mr. Sallaway, to whose instructions the excellence of the school singing is in great part due.

Rev. Dr. Campbell presided and gracefully introduced the several items of the short but interesting programme; and addresses were given by the reverend chairman and by City Superintendent Eaton. Afterwards the assembled visitors, some 150 or more in number, took advantage of the opportunity to inspect the handsomely adorned class rooms, the pupils holding an informal but none the less pleasurable reception. The programme for the day, to which complimentary reference has been made above, was as follows:

Chorus—"Sing, Sing, for Christmas"...
Recitation—"Baby's First Tooth"... John Dee (Div. VI).
Songs by Divisions VII. and VIII.
Recitation—"Apples"... William Rannells (VI).
Chorus—Vacation Song....
Recitation—"Ship Afire"... Ridge Pennock (V.).
Song—"The Hardy Norseman"... School.
Recitation—"The Absent-Minded Beggar" Hilles Huston (II.).
"The Maple Leaf"....
"Merry Christmas"....
"God Save the Queen."

The girls of the Central also met in their respective class rooms at the usual school hour of assembly, and were examined in the routine work of their departments until 10:30, when the junior classes were massed and a very interesting programme of music and recitations carried out, the children being addressed by Mrs. William Grant and by City Superintendent Eaton, dismissing with the singing of the national anthem at 11:30. At this hour the seniors were assembled, and also addressed by Mrs. Grant, "God Save the Queen" terminating the interesting proceedings. The programme presented by the juniors—pupils of divisions V, VI, VII and VIII, was as hereunder:

Opening—"Tinkle, Little Bells....
Recitation—"Christmas in the Nursery" Beatrice Rosson.
Song—"How Many Stars"....
Recitation—"Christmas"... Maudie Baker.
Song—"Busy Bee"... School.
Recitation—"A Merry Christmas" Edith Wilkerson.
Song—"Suppose"... School.
Recitation—"Sing-a-Song-a-Christmas" Alice Briggs.
Song—"Clap the Hands"... Seventh and Eighth Divisions.
Song—"Hush-a-Bye-Birdie"... (Sitting).
Recitation—"St. Nick"... Florence Adams.
Song—"When the Children Are Safe"... School.
Recitation—"Merry Christmas"... Vera Harris.
Song—"Carol, Sweetly Carol"... School.
Recitation—"Christmas in Funnyland"... Alice Lambert.
Song—"Come, Let us Joyous"... School.
Recitation—"Christmas Problem"... Buttercup King.
Song—"O, Lovely Star"... School.
Recitation—"Two Little Stockings"... Nellie Wollaston.
"God Save the Queen."

NORTH WARD AND SOUTH PARK.

Retiring Teacher Recipient of Pleasant Attentions—Exercises at the South Ward School.

The light, bright and cheerful North Ward school was all in gala garb for its closing—which also took place yesterday morning, of course, holly and evergreens mutely proclaiming the near approach of Christmas, but in a manner that no child could possibly misunderstand. The forenoon was occupied with classwork by all departments, the strict attention to business that is characteristic of this school being in no particular departed from. In the afternoon there were proceedings of a more entertaining nature, the assembly room being called into service and all classes assembled there in company—reinforced by a numerous company of admiring relatives and friends. The programme prepared for the occasion and carried out most successfully was:

"Men of Harlech"... School
"The Maple Leaf"... School
Recitation... Georgina Grant
Primary Song—"The Daisy"....
"Faded Coat of Blue"... School
Solo... Leonora Black
Recitation... Bertha Deaville
"Soldiers of the Queen"... School
Primary Song—"Up, Up in the Sky"
"Music Everywhere"... School
Recitation... Beatrice Wille
"Kris Kringle"... School
National Anthem....

Addresses of interest were also given by Mr. McCandless, who took occasion to compliment the teachers and pupils upon their marked display of hearty patriotism, and promised to provide the school with a handsome flag so soon as Britain's banner shall wave—as soon it must—over the troubled Transvaal; and by Rev. J. F. Vichert, the new pastor of Calvary Baptist church, who spoke with much humor and eloquence, both gentlemen congratulating teachers and pupils on their year's work, and wishing them the compliments of the season.

During the course of the afternoon's proceedings Miss King, a member of the teaching staff who is bidding farewell to the school room with the intention of being a principal at a happy wedding soon to be, was suitably "remembered" by her affectionate pupils, their feelings being expressed in the following address, accompanying a handsome 5 o'clock tea kettle and cruse, presented on behalf of the class by Masters Stanley Deaville and Harry Hall:

Dear Miss King: Another term is ended, and we join happily in our closing exercises. But we learn that you are to leave us. This makes us feel very sad, you have been so kind and good. When we were in trouble you soothed us with a kind word, and when we were naughty you kindly corrected us. In your teaching you have been simple and painstaking. Our difficulties were many, yet you never tired removing them; so we look upon our school days with pleasure. Now we wish to thank you. Though you go from us we assure you you shall still be our teacher, as we cannot but remember your loving example. Please accept this little gift from us. As you use it, may it recall to your mind some pleasant hours in the North Ward school. We trust that your womanly character and influence may be felt in your new home, and that the Master's blessing may always be yours.

YOUR PUPILS,
Seventh Div., North Ward School.

Victoria, Dec. 22, 1899.

After the programme and the departure of the children, with cheers for the Queen, the teachers, themselves, and the holidays, the members of the teaching staff enjoyed their annual breaking-up dinner, during which Miss King was again surprised, a forty-piece china tea set being the symbol of her fellow-teachers' regard, accompanied by the following address:

Dear Miss King: With feelings of mingled pleasure and sadness we meet tonight. The books are all closed, the lessons ended, the last echo of childish voices has died away in the silent corridors. Pleasant it is thus to meet and greet one another, the toils and anxieties of another year over, and the joys of Christmas so near at hand; but amid our notes of rejoicing there is a minor chord, for we cannot forget that this happy reunion is also a farewell, and that in the future when we meet we shall miss your gentle presence from our midst and listen in vain for the sympathetic tones of your voice. During the years in which we have been associated together as fellow teachers, we have learned to feel for you an esteem which words seem inadequate to express. Not only have you endeared yourself to us by the deep interest which you have ever manifested in the welfare of every member of this institution, but chiefly do we treasure the memory of your gentle dignity, your patient unselfishness, and your sympathetic kindness. Never, perhaps, will your example cease to influence and inspire us, and we sincerely and unitedly pray that in the new sphere upon which you are about to enter, the blessing of heaven may rest upon you and bring to you every happiness that mind can think or heart can wish. We beg of you to accept this souvenir of our affectionate regard, and we hope that in the days to come it may often remind you of the happy hours that you once spent in the North Ward school.

YOUR ASSOCIATE TEACHERS.

At the close of the dinner to Miss King, a number of appropriate and informal speeches were made by her associates, all joining in good wishes for her prosperity and her happiness in her new home.

The children of the various classes showed their respect and esteem for their teachers by presenting them with numerous Christmas gifts and cards; while the janitor and his good wife were also remembered as usual by the teachers, the former receiving a royal turkey and the latter several dainty pieces of chinaware.

THE SUBURBAN SCHOOLS.

Presentations to Teachers at West Victoria—Marked Improvement in Spring Ridge.

Victoria West school closed with the ordinary exercises of daily work in each department, the visitors being numerous and including Revs. J. P. D. Knox and D. MacRae, Mr. Beaumont Boggs, and Dr. Lewis Hall, of the trustee board. The closing was made notable by the presentation to the teachers of charming souvenirs of the festival season from their respective classes, Miss Gardiner, the vice-principal, received from the pupils of the second division a dainty silver-mounted vaseline pot, and Miss Barron of the fourth division, from her pupils, a neat silver and ebony shoe set and a hand-painted handkerchief case. Miss Nisbet of the junior grade presented two little girls, Muriel Tait of the senior class, and Jean Ramsay of the junior class, each with a sleeping doll suitably dressed, as a reward for neatness; while she in return received a number of presents from her pupils. The thanks of the West school staff are due to Mrs. Harvey for a beautiful prize, presented to the most progressive pupil of the fifth division and also to Mr. St. Clair for a complete set of "Stead's Books for Bairns," as a nucleus for a junior library.

There was a gratifyingly large representation of parents and friends at the Spring Ridge school in the morning when the classes under the direction of Mrs. A. W. Taylor (principal), Mr. Campbell, Miss Blackburn, and Miss Arthur, took leave of books and slates until the second Monday in the new year. Ordinary routine work was first carried on, in which all the visitors evinced due interest; and afterwards came a long and varied programme most acceptably presented. The dominant and dominating spirit of patriotism was fully marked in many of the songs and recitations, such appropriate selections as "Soldiers of the Queen," "The Maple Leaf," "Merry Christmas," etc., being much in favor. Addresses were also given by Trustee Marchant—who referred to the marked improvement in the work of this school, and suggested the advisability, instead of giving prizes altogether for the best or brightest pupils, that improvement prizes might very advantageously be introduced—and by Rev. E. G. Miller, who promised to treat the classes to a lecture on "The Bee" during the approaching term, his instructive address on "The Silkworm" still being held by the scholars of this branch in pleasant memory.

At Hillside school very tasteful decorative work was also in evidence, the pupils having daintily festooned the class room with holly and ivy; while Mrs. Andrews had utilized the blackboards for a display of charming drawings and tastefully arranged mottoes. From 9:30 until 10:30 the ordinary school work was carried on by the teachers—Misses Blackwell, Lucas, and Harrup; the scholars then presenting a good programme of choruses, recitations, solos, dialogues, etc., Mrs. Gordon Grant also delivering an interesting and appropriate address.

In the Kingston street school, the little folk of the junior divisions of James Bay district exemplified their school work, and followed the ordinary exercises of the school room with class songs, etc., which were much enjoyed by the guests of the occasion. Addresses were made by Mr. McMicking, Mrs. Pendray and the principal, Miss Lawson, and the children were dismissed after bidding good bye to the attending trustee with full military honors—a la instructor St. Clair.

In South Park school there was no departure from the ordinary routine of school life, except that numerous visitors were present, and Mr. McMicking, of the trustee board, took occasion to make a brief and apropos address.

Of course the results of the entrance examinations will not be known for some time yet.

AN OPEN LETTER.

To Mayor Redfern and Alderman Beckwith, Stewart, Bryden, Cameron and Humphreys.

Gentlemen: Will you kindly enlighten the ratepayers of the city of Victoria in regard to the Point Roberts-Chilliwack railway scheme, which you are supporting by answering the following questions?

1. What amount do the promoters of this scheme propose to pay Mr. Paterson for his equity of redemption in the Victoria & Sidney railway?

2. If it is correct that the Victoria & Sidney railway is now encumbered to the amount of $420,000, viz. $300,000 bond issue and $120,000 paid by the corporation of the city of Victoria and the provincial government being guaranteed interest—on said bonds?

3. Has the said railway company ever paid any interest on its bonds?

4. What was the original cost of right of way construction and equipment of the said railway?

5. To show their own faith in the scheme, how much stock are the promoters prepared to subscribe in the company to be formed?

6. Have the promoters any guarantee from either the Provincial or Dominion governments that a subsidy shall be given to the said company to be formed?

7. Have you considered that private interests are to be taken into consideration in regard to the streets through which it is proposed to extend the Victoria & Sidney railway, from Hillside Avenue to the E. & N. railway?

8. What amount will the city require to pay to the said property owners to reimburse them for injury to their property by reason of said extension?

9. Have the promoters agreed to rent the market building at $6,000 per annum provided the scheme is successfully floated, or has any agreement been arrived at in regard to the same?

10. Is the Victoria & Sidney railway as good a piece of railway construction as any portion of the C. P. R. which was stated to be so by Mr. Paterson at a public meeting recently?

11. Is the road bed of the Victoria & Sidney railway properly ballasted and in proper shape to sustain heavy traffic which would necessarily follow in case of transcontinental connection?

By giving this information you will be conferring a great favor on some of the unintelligent ratepayers and also assist them in deciding how to mark their ballot at the forthcoming municipal campaign.

Yours Truly,
W. McDONALD.
North Park Street.

A Lighthouse In Darkness.

Mysterious Failure of Light on Egg Island Will Be Investigated.

Schooner Sadie Turpel Disabled in a Gale—Tug Boat Captains Change.

The officers and crew of the Dominion government steamer Quadra will spend Christmas this year at sea, the vessel's absence from port being necessitated by the need of investigating at once conditions at Egg Island lighthouse, Queen Charlotte Sound, and the vessel left on that mission yesterday morning. Calling at Mary Island on her last Northern trip, Capt. Foote of the steamer Danube was notified that it had been reported to the authorities there on the 13th instant that the light at Egg Island was not showing. The Danube passed the lighthouse on December 17, and was unable to ascertain exactly whether or not the lighthouse was in operation, only observing a faint fixed light, instead of the customary revolving flash-light. The house at Egg Island is in charge of William Brown, who is absolutely alone save for the company of his three-year-old child, and it is conceivable that he may be prostrated by sickness, or even dead—or the lamps may be out of order. It is to ascertain the exact circumstances that the Quadra has gone North. The keeper of the light—a most important one, by the way—draws from the Dominion government the magnificent salary of $40 per month. Penned up in a desolate corner of the world, without communication with civilization for whole months at a time, the position is a most unenviable one; and as the light is not visited by the government steamer except on rare occasions during the year, the possibility of serious trouble occurring to the island hermits is not remote. The Quadra takes up a man who will take charge of the light if it be found that anything is wrong with Keeper Brown.

THE TURPEL IN A GALE.

Sealing Schooner Disabled in a Heavy Blow at Entrance to Straits.

The sealing schooner Sadie Turpel, Capt. A. McDougall, which left for the West Coast on Tuesday morning last for an Indian crew, returned to port yesterday in a rather dilapidated condition. The Turpel had got well down to the mouth of the Straits when early on Wednesday morning the heavy breeze which had accompanied her thus far on her voyage increased to the fury of a gale, the staunch little vessel losing her foremast and main topmast, and springing the main masthead. So fierce was the weather that it was thought best to put about and make for San Juan, which port was reached in a few hours. The tug mystery was sent from Victoria to render assistance, and the Turpel was towed back to the city, arriving here early yesterday morning. The disabled schooner will be repaired at once, and leave again for the sealing grounds as soon as possible.

LOCAL NEWS.

The Aldermanic Contest.—It is understood that endeavors are being made to induce ex-Ald. James Baker to consent to stand for North Ward at the approaching municipal elections. Mr. Baker is averse to again accepting aldermanic honors, and will not likely consent to be a candidate.

St. Andrew's Church Treat.—The young folk of St. Andrew's Presbyterian church in their turn had the honor of a visit from Santa Claus' special representative last night, that functionary distributing seasonable gifts from a well filled tree. To close the entertainment, Mr. R. Hutcheson gave an interesting exhibition of the working of the Roentgen ray apparatus.

Regimental Order.—The following order was issued yesterday by Lieut.-Col. Gregory, commanding the Fifth regiment. "Lieut. T. E. Pooley, acting adjutant, having applied for six months' leave of absence, Lieut. R. H. Pooley will until further orders perform the duties of acting adjutant. Second Lieutenant H. M. Grahame will until further orders take command of No. 4 Company."

The Girls Are Glad.—In connection with the pleasing drill competition at the High school yesterday, it will please the girls to know that Capt. Clive Phillipps-Wolley has expressed his intention of offering a suitable prize for a calisthenic competition somewhat on the line of his suggestion in presenting the Hayward flag. The schools are announced to reopen on January 8, the second Monday in the new year.

Helping the Needy.—The various local charitable organizations are making the usual preparations to provide a measure of comfort and happiness for the needy ones of the city, though happily there are few cases this year really requiring attention. Following is a list of those making further donations to the Friendly Help society: Berthe Chance, Georgina Babbington, Katie Harburger, Herman Harburger, Elaine McMicking, Annie Williams, John Williams, Thomas Jeffrey, Bertie Bendrodte, Victor Sexsmith, Davida Raymour.

Victorians on Board—The report of the fact that the steamer Oceanic was overdue at Liverpool caused considerable uneasiness here yesterday, there being a number of Victorians on board, among them Hon. P. O'Reilly, Mrs. O'Reilly Mr. O'Reilly and Mr. H. Bullock-Webster. The arrival of the steamer had not been reported yesterday, although she was due on Thursday. There is not likely to be anything serious the matter with the vessel, but as Mrs. O'Reilly was very ill when she left here, her friends are anxious to hear of her arrival.

Victorians at the Front.—Probably no British Columbia family is better represented at the front—if as well—than that of Mrs. Blumenthal, a former and well just come to the family that her eldest son, Louis, is a prisoner in the hands of the Boers, at Johannesburg, the family home being first of all robbed of all the provisions that had been provided in anticipation of a protracted siege—this by the Boer authorities—and then relieved of every article of furniture by the Kaffirs. Another of the "Blumenthal boys," Sydney, is serving with the Natal mounted police, with whom he has been during the past two years, filling the responsible and hazardous office of despatch-bearer; while Joe, the youngest, has recently joined Col. Baden-Powell's Imperial Light Horse, and is now in the neighborhood of Mafeking. Mrs. Blumenthal is at present among the refugees at Capetown.

Naylor in California.—Rev. Mr. Naylor, the evangelist, who failed to appear before the investigating committee of the Methodist conference, although he professed an anxiety to meet his accusers and clear his character, left Victoria a week ago to-night for San Francisco, and is no doubt still in California, unless he caught a steamer for shores beyond the Pacific. He left Victoria on the Walla Walla for San Francisco. His beard had been cropped, but he was easily recognized by a gentleman who was on the wharf. He and his companion drove to the wharf at the last moment and hurriedly checking their baggage boarded the steamer.

DIED OF SPINAL MENINGITIS.

W. J. Craigie, a Colonist Employee, Succumbs After a Few Days' Illness.

William John Craigie, youngest son of the late Thomas Craigie, and for several years past an employee of the Colonist job printing department, died yesterday after a very brief illness. Deceased had a few days previously complained of feeling unwell, but his illness was not considered serious. His condition becoming suddenly worse, Dr. Frank Hall was summoned and he found the patient to be suffering from spinal meningitis, happily a very rare affliction here. Young Craigie rapidly succumbed and passed away at an early hour yesterday morning at the residence of his mother, Mrs. John L. Blackmore, 239 Yates street.

Deceased, who was but 19 years of age, served as a "subject" to hypnotists McEwen and Flint while they were here; and when news of his death was first circulated some were inclined to attribute it to the experience he had undergone with the hypnotists, but his physician is disinclined to connect that with the case.

The funeral, conducted under the auspices of the A. O. F., of which deceased was a member, will take place on Sunday next from the Yates street residence, no one to care. The glory, the dash, the inspiring crash of battle all dwindled to this. Pluck! It was never needed as it was in that forlorn moment.

Coolness in danger has always been the characteristic of the British. I may say—remembering Roosevelt and other of the gallant fellows who took the hill of San Juan—of the Anglo-Saxon. Essentially of the British, however. When at Waterloo a tree near which Wellington was standing was smashed by a round shot, the splendid old chap said, laconically: "Good practice, that; I think they fire better than they used to in Spain." A story in connection with Junot, the brilliant enemy of the Iron Duke, is brought to mind by White's calm face as he passed the exploding shell outside Ladysmith the other day. A similar missile burst near Junot, covering him and his staff with dust. "At any rate, we shan't need any pounce powder," he laughed. Everyone remembers the story of Cromwell (Lord Rosebery's Crumwell, by the way), when a cavalier soldier, inopportunely meeting the Great Roundhead, promptly leveled his clumsy gun at him and pulled the trigger. "Had I been thy officer, friend," said the cruel Cromwell, "I would cashier thee for not keeping thy gun in order." No one of Irish birth and blood can like Ironsides, but that need not prevent one from acknowledging that in the matter of grim courage he had few equals.

"Again, take Raglan. They sawed off his arm there on the field of Waterloo, without cocaine, or chloroform, or ether, or any of the modern devices for killing the horror of such agony—he never blenched—but when they were carrying away the severed limb he called, almost with gaiety, undoubtedly with insouciance, "Come back, you fellows! don't throw that arm of mine away till I get the ring off the finger." In a delightful article in a London paper some months since, which, be it said, I have generously dealt with in the matter of culling from it some history—mere literary kleptomania—very common complaint—they tell the story of the aged Ostermann who was condemned to death by Elizabeth of Prussia. "He was dragged to the scaffold, his wig and cap torn from him, his shirt rent, and he was bidden to lay his head on the block. Then, when he was expecting death with every heart-beat, a reprieve was announced. 'Very well,' was the philosophical reply; 'then be so good as to hand me my wig and cap again.' He finished his toilet imperturbably, and walked away as if nothing had happened." A rummy old beggar he was, as our chum, Kipling, was used to say.

Our own Prince of Wales showed not a little pluck when he turned over to sleep again while the earthquake at Naples was going on. Since, he averred, he didn't see that getting up would stop the row, he preferred to finish his sleep. One of the finest instances of sheer pluck which has ever come under my personal observation was once when, riding late at night through a wooded country with an old Irish squire, a band of Moonlighters, or Land-Leaguers, leaped out and caught the horses by the heads. More than one gun barrel leaped to shoulder, when the dear old man interposed. "Wait, boys," he said, "don't shoot till I take a pinch of excellent snuff that has just reached me from Scotland." And they were shaking hands all round in a few minutes. "Tut," said the squire, "you ought to be ashamed to be threatening an old man and a child," and they were. They were not bad-hearted fellows, only mistaken.

There is a great deal of coolness mixed in with Canadian blood. Canadians do not strike me as men who easily get "rattled." Wherefore we need have little fear on the score of pluck and cool-headedness on the part of our contingent. We look for great things from our boys who have been so rapidly pushed to the front. A ludicrous saying with which I will not inflict you—seeing that, though delightfully clever, it savors of what you might call coarseness—comes to my mind. We will put it rather as the witty Austral-Hibernian editor did in "The Hillyars and the Burtons": "Sus tranquillus bibit factem."

HAVANA TRAMWAYS.

New York, Dec. 21.—All the street railway interests in the city of Havana were consolidated to-day at a meeting in the office of the treasurer of the Havana Electric Railway Co., in this city, thus ending a contest begun more than a year ago.

The Queen Adelaide, of the N. P. line, which sailed from Yokohama for this port on December 17, is due about the New Year.

FELIX LESLOUIS DEAD.

Pioneer of FiftyEight Passed Away Yesterday Morning—A Busy Life.

The pioneers of this province will learn with feelings of deep regret that Mr. Felix Leslouis, one of the oldest settlers of Victoria, having arrived here in the year 1858 with the rush of gold-seekers from California, has passed away. He was identified with active mining on the Fraser and Thompson rivers and in Cariboo, after which he accepted a position as gauger for the Hudson's Bay Co., a position which he occupied for upwards of twenty years. Old-timers will recollect the deceased more particularly as one who took a leading part in amateur theatricals and a singer of note in his native tongue. "Le Beau Nicholas" was one of his favorites and the walls of the old Theatre Royal, formerly situated on Government street, have resounded again and again with the encores of theatre-goers of those old days. The announcement that he was going to appear on the stage was in those days a guarantee of a crowded house. The deceased was one of the founders of the French hospital, of which institution he was an active member until the same was taken over by the Jubilee hospital. He has been ailing for about a year. One daughter, the wife of Mr. A. Borde, city water collector, survives him. Mr. Leslouis was 84 years of age.

The funeral will take place on Sunday at 1:45 from the residence of Mr. A. Borde, Blanchard street, and at 2 at St. Andrew's R. C. cathedral.

TROUBLESOME INDIANS.

Chilcotins Attempt to Drive White Settlers Out of Their Country.

The Chilcotin Indians are again causing trouble in the vicinity of Tatla lake, their objection to the settlement of white men in that vicinity being the cause. Mr. B. Franklin and Edward Elkin, a brother of the man for whose murder one of the Chilcotins is serving a life term, commenced the erection of a fence around a tract of land acquired by Mr. Franklin on Tatla lake, fully 100 miles from the reserve. The Indians threatened that if the fence was built they would burn it down and drive off the cattle, but the white men persisted until one day they were driven to their cabin, the door of which was broken in by the natives. Two handy rifles, however, prevented the Indians from committing murder. The next day Franklin and Elkin started for Alexis Creek. They were met on the way by the Indians, who again threatened them, but after a little parleying allowed them to pass. At Alexis Creek warrants were sworn out for the arrest of the ringleaders, and constables have started out to serve them.

MUNICIPAL POINTERS.

Sir: Has the corporation the authority under the Municipal Act to enter into a speculation by taking stock or shares in a work to be undertaken beyond the limits of the city, or within the limit. If it has the authority, no money should be handed over until the whole capital is subscribed and ten per cent. paid up.

Mr. Paterson should not receive any money for his interest in the Victoria & Sidney railway, but should be paid in stock. Should he receive money, the interest paid by the city for so many years should be first deducted. The safest course for the city would be to hand over a bonus to a responsible company after the undertaking is completed.

The city should look well to its liabilities in the immediate future. Say—

Railway bonus	$500,000
Point Ellice bridge disaster	500,000
Three bridges will have to be constructed soon at $200,000 each	600,000

Taxation should be equalized so as not to place all on real estate. Heavy taxation will have the effect of increasing rentals and of driving people out of the country.

The local improvement charges in addition to the ordinary taxes is as much or more than the owners can stand.

The part of Fort street wooden paved is too flat on the crown—the water lodges on it, which will cause sinking and rot. The evil consequences of bad road making is evident everywhere. One wise road overseer laid a foundation of sandstone on some of the streets, and was allowed to do this by a wiser street committee. Such work yields a constant crop of a mixture of clay and sand—good plaster for a log hut.

PONITER.

THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE.

Pluck of the British Soldier Illustrated by Several Historic Anecdotes.

From Women's Kingdom in Toronto Mail.

There is a wonderful picture in a recent issue of the Illustrated London News which gives food for thought. Gen. White is represented as riding unconcernedly by while a shell is exploding within ten yards of him. The man wears that impassive expression which made an American officer once remark to the writer that he never saw anything human so wooden in appearance as the British soldier. "A mere machine" he called him, and I think I can see Tommy A. thrust his tongue in his cheek and screw his eyes up to laughing point at this highest of all praise in his wise estimation. A mere machine. What greater can be said of masses of men, horses and big guns who can be moved by the command of one man as chessmen are moved upon the board? All the world runs by machinery now. We sew, write, plant, reap and travel by it. We fight by it, and our "wooden" men have conquered worlds through it.

Pluck is not a blind principle of audacity. We need it in every walk in life. Women need it even more than men for the commonplace routine that is often so pathetically heroic. It is easier to be brave on the spur of the moment than in the monotonous grind of daily life. Men and women who are cowards in the little things rarely show pluck in the big moments. And yet the big moments are easier. The harness put on for occasion does not wear and gall and eat into the back as does that of every-day life. Again, in war time and amid war scenes men get used to the overturning of all the ordinary ways of living. In Cuba, for instance, men, fever-worn and exhausted for lack of decent food, medicine and the commonest necessaries, failed, after the first vigorous outcry, to rebel or even to wonder at their fate. When things become dire, nature applies an anaesthetic. The human fibres, so to speak, become calloused. When the plague transports—I use the word advisedly—swung to and fro in the tide off Florida, when forlorn men turned dying eyes upon the country they had fought and suffered for, and failed to find relief, they simply turned about listlessly, not caring much—numb, tired out, broken. No supplies; no medicines, no one to care. The glory, the dash, the inspiring crash of battle all dwindled to this. Pluck! It was never needed as it was in that forlorn moment.

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