

The Weekly British Colonist.

Tuesday, October 24, 1865.

THE QUESTION AT ISSUE IN
METCHOSIN.

It has been remarked by a modern Machiavelli that "there are some who write, talk, and think so much about virtue that they really have no time to practice it." To paraphrase the saying, we might with truth assert that the free-trade politicians prate so much about liberality that they really have no time to indulge in it. From beginning to end they are themselves selfishness personified, and selfishness carried to the narrow-mindedness which is best described as "penny wisdom and pound foolishness." They bind down the Island as a helpless dependent of Washington Territory and the adjoining American States, and ask the British portion of our population to support them as benefactors of the colony. They enter into contracts with the farmers of a foreign country, and make that a valid excuse for ignoring the agricultural capacity of Vancouver Island. They tell the settler that agricultural articles fetch most remunerative prices in Victoria, and when the Island farmer comes into town with his produce, on the great principles of free trade they tell him they are sorry they cannot purchase his potatoes or his grain, because they have entered into arrangements with the farmers on "the other side." When they are told that they ought to encourage home production, they answer that Vancouver Island can never be an agricultural country; when this libel is exposed and they have not the remnant of a rag to cover the absurdity of their ruinous doctrine; they say our farmers are loafers and have neither the ability nor the inclination to ply their vocation. In every instance they rely for support on the grossest fabrications. They are ready at all times to libel the country and libel the settler. The very men who will stand up today and ask the farmers of Metchosis to vote for the farmer's bitterest enemy, Dr. Ash, will, if they are asked why there is not more produce raised on the Island, reply glibly that we have no farmers, and if we had there is no land for them to cultivate. The burden of their song has been from the commencement, the traducing of the Island and its resources. With a consistency that is in keeping with their general demeanor, they say at one moment we have no extent of agricultural land and in the next call lustily for immigration. They tell us, as the *Chronicle* does yesterday, that there are now no land speculators in the colony because the taxation on the speculator's land at present is equal to the land's original cost. As the taxation is one per cent. on the value of the property, it necessarily follows that if it is equal to the original cost, the land must have increased in value the nice little figure of ten thousand per cent. This is the sort of logic with which the farmers are treated. Land speculation has ceased because the speculators, poor unfortunate fellows, are only making a hundred dollars on every dollar they originally expended! To take the most preposterous assertions and treat them in the most preposterous manner is the *argumentum ad judicium* of the party calling itself free port. If we detailed the most noisy patients in bedlam as a corps of politicians, we could not, in as many words, get so much incoherency or so much blatant nonsense. And these are the men who will mildly request the farmers of Metchosis today to vote for Dr. Ash. If they would first ask the settler to whet his razor and draw it across his own throat they would perform a more humane duty.

We have already alluded to the fact that Metchosis is the only agricultural constituency in the colony which returns a free port member. There is not a really practical intelligent farmer in any other district but sees in free port the ruin of the agricultural interest—not one but knows that it would sacrifice to-morrow every home industry, if it could be only certain of retaining its paltry trade with Puget Sound. To preserve this trade its supporters are actually paying the foreign producer a bonus—they are taking his articles in preference to those grown on the Island. They will not make roads, because roads conduce to settlement and to the profit of the farmer. They will not tax foreign produce as it ought to be taxed, because that would compel them to buy from the Island settler. They will, in fact, do nothing but blusteringly declare that Victoria is Vancouver Island and that the farmer must depend on Victoria and it alone for his market, and all the while they take every means to ruin him by keeping him isolated from the town during the winter through bad roads, and by offering him when he does reach town about half the price they pay the farmer at Whidby Island and Puget Sound. If the electors of Metchosis are content with this state of things—if they have all grown rich through Dr. Helmcken's political, we will not say medical advice; if the free port has enabled them to build palatial residences and live like country gentlemen, we would say by all means vote for Dr. Ash. If on the other hand they are not content with the present state of things, if they are more am-

bitious than to play second fiddle to the farmers of the American territory; if they desire a better market for their produce, and a better price for it when they bring it to market; if in fact they want to live as farmers ought in every new country to live—prosperous and happy—let them then to a man vote for Mr. Elliott. No one better knows their wants, no one is more familiar with the farming statistics of the country, and no one has done more for the farmer in an individual capacity through the Agricultural Society. If the voters of Metchosis are independent men, they will vote for Mr. Elliott; if they are intelligent men and understand their own interest they will vote for Mr. Elliott; if they are grateful men and are willing to recognize the services of those who have worked for them they will vote for Mr. Elliott. Two courses are before them—the mainly straightforward pathway that leads to honor and to profit, and the debasing road that leads to the mess of pottage and inevitable ruin. Will they accept Dr. Ash and the mess of pottage?

GOV. BROSS ON SAN FRANCISCO.—The visit of Gov. Bross of Illinois, to Victoria, with the Hon. Schuyler Colfax and party, last summer, is fresh in the memory of our readers. We look forward with some degree of interest for the accounts furnished by these gentlemen, who were all, with one exception, connected with the press of their sojourn in H. M. dominions; in the meantime the following notes about San Francisco, furnished by Gov. Bross to his paper the *Chicago Tribune*, will be acceptable to many:—When Sidney Smith was asked, more than a generation ago, where the three great cities of the American continent would be, he is reported to have put his finger upon the map at New York, Chicago and New Orleans. Of course California was then a part of Mexico, and the Pacific coast was little known. The gold bearing rocks and sands of these shores have suddenly built up an empire here, destined to improve indefinitely in wealth, intelligence and power. The harbor of San Francisco is entered by a narrow strait, and being perfectly land-locked and extending for many miles in all directions, there is perfect safety and ample room for all the navies in the world. This is the only opening into the interior for a thousand miles to the south and twelve hundred miles north along the shores of the Pacific, and being the natural terminus for the great Pacific railway, over which the commerce of the continent and of the world will in a very few years be rolling, the great English philosopher, were he now living, would undoubtedly substitute San Francisco for New Orleans, were he asked to name the three leading cities of the continent. Twenty years ago this territory belonged to Mexico, now California is a rich and powerful State, with her three representatives in Congress, and San Francisco, which fifteen years ago was a mere clump of shanties and sandbanks, is a substantially built city of 100,000 inhabitants. At her wharves can be seen at almost any time ships from nearly all the chief maritime cities of the world. Montgomery, the principal business street, reminds one more of Broadway, New York, or Clark and Lane streets, in Chicago, than any other in America. When once the Pacific railroad is completed, as it ought to be, in five or at most in eight years, San Francisco will grow apace till a million of people are found within her limits. The child now lives who will see this city larger than any other now upon the continent.

CALIFORNIA COAL OIL.—The manufacture of coal oil from the crude petroleum obtained from the springs in various parts of the State, is rapidly becoming one of the leading branches of our local industry. In addition to the extensive works of Stanford Brothers at North Beach, of the California Petroleum Company's Refinery, Dr. Benoit's Refinery at the foot of Third street, and several others, Coleman, Howard & Co., of Front street, within a few days will have a distillery completed at South Beach capable of turning out 100 barrels of oil per day. This establishment, which is fitted up with all the most improved machinery for the purpose, is under the charge of an experienced "oil man" from Pennsylvania, and we hope will prove a success to the enterprising gentlemen who have invested their capital in the undertaking. We understand that Coleman, Howard & Co. intend to purchase the crude oil from whoever may have any to sell—as bankers buy gold from the miners—in such quantities as they can obtain it. Such a business will give a great impetus to the development of the oil interests of the State. It is estimated that the present distilleries furnish about one half the oil consumed in the city. Increased supply must certainly cause a reduction in price, as the distilleries are rival establishments, and there will consequently be some competition.—*S. F. paper.*

THE RUSSIAN TELEGRAPH.—Minister Clay has transmitted to the State Department at Washington a copy of the conditions and stipulations between the Russian Telegraph Department and Hiram Sibley for the establishment of telegraphic communication between Russia and America. The exclusive right is granted to the latter, the plenipotentiary of the Western Union Telegraph Company, for thirty years from the day the line shall be opened. The Russian Government is to grant further time as it may judge convenient. In order to further the undertaking Government allows 40 per cent on the proceeds on dispatches transmitted by it over the line to and from America, and in order to contribute as much as possible to the success of the present undertaking, the Minister of Public Duties will adopt the measures necessary for securing the telegraph from being maliciously injured by local populations; but at the same time the Government refuses to take upon itself any responsibility for such injuries of any nature whatever. The company is allowed to import materials free of duty.

UNION vs. THE FREE PORT.

Overwhelming Defeat of the Free Port

The adjourned debate on this subject came off before the class of the Mechanics' Institute last night. The debate was opened by Mr. Adam Watson in a clear sound sensible speech, in which he showed the utter inutility of the free port, that under its sway the colony had not produced a single article for the markets of the world except a little coal, and that it had brought the colony into its present deplorable state. Mr. Watson was repeatedly and loudly applauded. Mr. John Flint followed for the free port, and was succeeded in turn by Mr. Hardy Gillard and Mr. Seelye. The latter gentleman held up strongly the advantages of union, in securing departmental Government, and combined efficiency and economy in its administration. Dr. Evans came next and endeavored to show that it was the free port and that alone which had built up Victoria in preference to the ports on the Sound. He admitted that the policy of the late Governor, Douglas, in forcing everything to come to Victoria, had done a great deal for the place, but that had only lasted for four months while a gunboat was stationed at the Mouth of the Fraser. The reverend gentleman was put right in his facts however by Messrs. Watson and Piddwell, who stated that they were prepared to prove that Customs duties had been enforced at Victoria for more than a year. The speaker also brought forward another assertion, viz., that although New Westminster had been a port of entry for six or seven years not a single direct cargo from either Valparaiso or Portland had ever reached it—a statement which brought down loud cries of oh! oh!

Mr. Disette having wound up the debate in a speech singularly destitute of argument or point, a vote was taken on the question, which, as explained by the chairman and several members, was to be confined to the free port point, and not to be considered as antagonistic to union. The result was fully two to one against the free port, and its announcement was received with loud cheers.

ALLEGED ARSON.

Maurice Carey and David MacFadden appeared at the Police Court, yesterday charged on suspicion of attempted arson.

The Attorney-General appeared to watch the case on behalf of the Crown. Mr. Ring defended the prisoner.

The Attorney-General said notice had been given to the accused to produce the policy of insurance. Mr. Bishop said it should be produced.

After some discussion it was agreed between the counsel that the two charges should be taken together to save time.

Mr. Warnes, in cross examination by Mr. Wood said—I have heard Maurice Carey express hatred towards Mr. DeCosmos; he has done so more than once; that was when Mr. DeCosmos was standing against the door; he said he wished the d—d animal was away from it.

He (Carey) never expressed anything with regard to the building; I went round to Carey's Sunday after the fire; Carey told me that he had told DeCosmos that he did not care a d—n if it did not injure any body else but DeCosmos if the place was burned down; that was all that was said in the store; afterwards we went to the Commercial and Turgoose's said it was about 11:30 when he (Carey) was there on Saturday night, after that we (Carey and Warnes) went to the ship and found Major; we all came off of the ship and went to the Albion and had a glass and talked about the fire; I said Major ought to go and give his evidence at the Police Court, but they would not take it, so we (Major and Warnes) went back to the Gem to Carey; Major left us saying he wanted to light his fires; as we went along the street Carey said to me I am afraid of Dave McFadden if they put him on the stand for they will question him so very hard; I said I suppose they will.

Cross-examined by Mr. Ring.—The police have never said anything to me about rewards; I was present at a conversation between Carey and DeCosmos about the alterations; he hated that Carey had against Mr. DeCosmos was about the alterations.

By the Bench.—Who is Major?

Witness.—The man who was with Carey at Turgoose's on Saturday night.

Mr. Nuttall examined by Mr. Wood swore to the policy of insurance. The rest of his evidence has already been given.

Amor DeCosmos, examined by Mr. Wood, swore to being owner of the property, and that he gave the alarm of fire.

Several other witnesses were examined, but nothing material was elicited. There being no further evidence against McFadden he was discharged.

Mr. Ring addressed the Court on behalf of the prisoner stating that there was no evidence to render it necessary that the case should go to a higher Court. The Bench said he evidence of Warnes was very strong, and unless Mr. Ring proposed to bring evidence to disprove his statements he should feel it his duty to send the case to a higher court.

Mr. Ring said he had no evidence to produce, but he trusted the Court would lessen the bail, which however, the Court refused.

JEFF. DAVIS AND HIS FAMILY.—It is stated that on the 25th of August an officer of authority called on Jeff. Davis, who announced himself as in very good health, the only drawback being a carbuncle on his leg and a slight touch of erysipelas. In speaking of Wirtz, Davis said that he had never seen or heard of him before his arrest; adding that from what he knew of Winder, having been a classmate of his at West Point, he did not believe he would be guilty of such awful acts of inhumanity as are laid to his charge. In other words, he considers Wirtz the prime actor, and the only rebel officer guilty of the inhuman treatment of our men at Andersonville.

A subscription is in circulation in Richmond for the relief of Mrs. Jefferson Davis and family, who it is said are in reduced circumstances. So far the effort has met with very liberal responses, and the probability is that enough will be raised to supply them with all they need.—*Am. paper.*

JOINT STOCK COMPANIES (LIMITED).

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BRITISH COLONIST.—Sir,—Laboring under a weak minded and preposterous delusion, derived from certain vague principles inculcated in the old country touching common honesty, to say nothing about a just recognition of the claims of labor as opposed to the legitimate investment of capital, I placed great faith in colonial speculations paraded as admirable schemes for the "development of our resources." As a new chum with an astounding plenitude of dollars (i. e. for Vancouver Island, without any connection with the Hudson's Bay Company), I was welcomed by the mercantile classes as a remarkably shrewd fellow. I learnt, with much satisfaction, that the amount of mineral wealth in the interior was inexhaustible, and upon enquiry I ascertained that there were adequate grounds for the statement: Upon the recommendations of an eminent commercial firm in Wharf street, I purchased shares in the Bungalow Aerostated Mining Co. Being of a sanguine and convivial temperament I was rapidly initiated into the mysteries of the financial and managerial department. I found that a strict adherence to truth was not an indispensable qualification in the discharge of directorial duties, and although my capacity for astonishment had been somewhat stretched beyond orthodox limits, its elasticity was hardly equal to the occasion. However, I was seduced into this luminous social swim, out of which I was to emerge with a fabulous fortune; but, strange to say, I came up in an ignominious condition in the Bankruptcy Court, from whence a legal philanthropist restored me in a pauperized state to a very small circle of sympathizing friends, who, in a spirit of cheerful condolence suggested that as yet I had not acquired the requisite "smartness" for the Pacific Coast. There was another curious coincidence, many of my colleagues came out of the transaction with an addition to their worldly prosperity. I set about solving the problem of smartness, and it dawned upon my feeble intellect that this precious mental endowment was remotely related to swindling eccentricities. The successful men seemed to my diseased imagination to trade upon the exigencies of the working man, a plastic secretary of precarious means is furnished with an eight dollar suit, and the shares liberally subscribed for by a few speculative sharpers, of dubious antecedents, but with reputed balances at their bankers. There is no doubt from their punctual attendance at church, and happy disposition for convenient flukes at billiards, that they are substantial, and eminently respectable citizens. Upon some such representation struggling artisans and broken miners are dispatched to the locality, and after a detention of months the whole affair turns out a fizzle. The men return and apply for their hardy earned wages, whereupon a pleasant allusion is made to the Winding-up Act. These commercial maw-worms, in most cases, ignore their responsibilities to the skilled laborer, for whose services they clamor so loudly at election time. If the records of our law courts are carefully watched the fact cannot be overlooked that William Sykes, of burglarious memory, is respectable in comparison with these vultures, who ruthlessly prey upon the vitals of honest industry. Many a sturdy, though glowering, face that now wanders discontentedly on our side-walks, can reveal sad indications of the utterly rotten system which prevails with our "smart" men of business in Vancouver Island.

Yours truly,
A VICTIM TO COLONIAL HUMBUG.

THE ATLANTIC CABLE.—The following notice was posted at Lloyd's on Saturday, from the directors of the Atlantic Telegraph Company, respecting the future operations in respect to the Atlantic cable: "It is not intended to send out the Great Eastern to repair the cable during the present season, but she will immediately commence her reftment to enable her to take in a new cable, and will proceed to sea in May or June next year, for the purpose of out paying a new cable and to resuscitate the present one in connection with the operation."

Poor old Justice Haliburton is dead. I heard the last speech which he made in the House of Commons. It was made in a ghostly voice, and was evidently an expiring effort of worn out nature. The subject was the Canadian defences, and it was a mixture of broad humor, eccentricities and good sense. Sam Slick the clockmaker, and Sam Slick the attaché, are characters which will long live in English literature. The poor old man sunk very gradually and at last died suddenly, and without a trace of pain in his pleasant house at Isleworth. Although he was certainly an extremely old person—quaint in his manners and grotesque in his opinions—he was greatly esteemed and even beloved by those who knew him best.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* begins an article on the Far-West of British America in this fashion:—"If the British Government will build one-third of our fortifications, and guarantee the loan with which we will build the other two-thirds, and give us an intercolonial railway, and make us a present of a million or so square miles of territory, we will allow it the privilege of defending us with the whole forces of the empire. That would really not be an unfair description of the bargain which the Canadian envoys have succeeded in driving with Mr. Cardwell."

The whole article is written in this spirit; the impression prevails that the Canadian Ministers made an extremely good bargain, and that Mr. Cardwell was no match for them.

SHIPPING INTELLIGENCE.—The Eastern Chief at Liverpool and the Princess Royal at London were loading at latest dates. The Severn had sailed from London for this port. At San Francisco the brig Brewster was on the berth.

CHANGING BASE.

[From the Oregonian.]

Our Victoria neighbors have found after six years' reliance on a single resource, that it is necessary for them to "change their base," and tend to the development of industrial pursuits. The lesson taught by the course of our cousins is well worthy the attention of those Oregonians who seem to rely upon the single thread system of doing business. The *Colonist* of September 30th has the following pertinent introductory on the subject, written on the inspiration of a well-timed article showing the fact, that while commerce is suffering the depression it is in Victoria, Nanaimo presented more flourishing indications than it had ever displayed before.

To make up for past deficiencies, which seems in these days to be a common desire on the part of losers, the attention of the Victoria people has been directed to the coal deposits, and they are reminded that while men are shaking their heads despondingly, a fleet of vessels are awaiting their slow turn at Nanaimo to ship their cargoes of the mineral wealth abounding in the country. The *Colonist* uses some plain language.

The commerce of Vancouver Island has most undoubtedly been neglected, and the true interests now being developed will be likely to redeem her credit. In such cases it is correct to state the class of persons financing, and we learn from the paper before us that it is to another class than those of former years that they are already indebted for the absorption of a considerable number of men out of the unemployed population. Discoveries of coal in other portions of the country are being turned to good account, and companies are intent on bringing the article into market as speedily as possible.

LATE EUROPEAN ITEMS.

Garibaldi's youngest son is going to England to study civil engineering.

The Pope of Rome was seventy-three years old on the 13th of May, and on the 16th of August he reached the nineteenth year of his pontificate.

It is stated that the Empress Charlotte of Mexico will visit Europe shortly, the reason assigned being the alarming illness of her father King Leopold.

Monster demonstrations of the working classes have taken place in London in favor of the free opening of the Kew Gardens on Sunday.

The present population of London is 3,015,494; of the borough of Liverpool, 475,868; city of Manchester, 354,930.

The Mexican war is daily growing less popular in France. The French (a majority at least) can see no glory in it.

The house at Frankfurt in which Goethe was born has been undergoing the process of restoration, and already is nearly as it was in 1749, when the poet drew his first breath in it.

The King of Portugal in opening the Cortes announced that a strict law would shortly be brought forward for securing the final abolition of slavery in the Portuguese possessions.

An extraordinary mission is to be sent to Japan from Florence, for the purpose of entering into commercial relations with the Tycoon, especially in reference to the silk trade.

Another melancholy death of an English tourist by falling from a Swiss cliff is reported. The victim is a clergyman, a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and a master of Rugby School.

Vesuvius continues to spout fire from its principal mouth. In the opinion of competent persons, however, there appears to be no reason to apprehend an imminent complete eruption.

Thomas Carlyle is traveling in Scotland. He is in search of relaxation and rest, his "Life of Frederick the Great" having, it is said, involved the investigation of years, and well nigh the health of the illustrious author.

The local papers of Bristol and Clifton, England, announce the arrival there of "Prince Jerome Napoleon and the Princess Clotilde." As that lady was in France all the time, there is a great deal of impertinent curiosity, in which the Princess herself possibly shares, to know who Ploq-Plon's mysterious companion could be.

A large sun-fish has just been captured by some fishermen at Tenby, on the Welsh coast. The fish-gate the fishermen are exciting chase, but they ultimately succeeded in capturing it with gaffs and boat hooks, and then it was towed on shore to the beach. The weight of the fish was twelve hundred pounds, and it was five feet in diameter. In swimming it turns upon itself like a wheel, which renders it very difficult to catch.

The Bombay correspondent of the *London Times* estimates the fallures in that city at £25,000,000. Most revolting scenes occur at the meetings of the mchroom financial associations which have been at once the fruit and cause of the evil. Shareholders accuse the directors; the latter resort to the shareholders: some of the directors are said to have acted without the others, who would fain repudiate responsibility for their acts. Mutual accusations and threats of personal chastisement abound. In one case a parsee manager of one of these bubble companies was rescued from his infuriated victims only by an English constable.

THE MINES OF GREAT BRITAIN.—The mining returns of the United Kingdom have just been issued, and from them it appears that the production of coal in Great Britain amounts to no less than 30,000,000 tons: This is the product of 3,268 collieries. Of iron last year a total of 10,064,890 tons were obtained. The total value of minerals for 1863, bought at the place of production, was £81,604,047. The value of the metal smelted from the metalliferous ores was £13,281,869. If to this amount be added the value of the coals at the pit's mouth, £23,107,968, and £1,500,000 for other minerals, the total value of the minerals of the kingdom will be found to be £49,979,837.

FENIANS IN NEW YORK.—The Central Council of the Fenian Brotherhood, now in session at the Astor House in that city, have called a special general Congress of the entire organization in the United States to meet in Philadelphia on Monday the 16th of October.