

THE SAN JUAN QUESTION.

(From the *Port Hope Times*.)

We copy below the letter of a Mr. Brown ing, of Percy, which appeared in the *Toronto Mail*. Mr. Brownling has lived for many years in Vancouver, and is intimately connected with its geography. From his statement, it appears that the importance of the Island of San Juan has been greatly overestimated, and that our wrath and grief over the decision of the Emperor of Germany is really not warranted; for the Dominion retains not alone broad and deep channels, like the Plumper Pass, but it seems that the strategical position of the Island of San Juan has been greatly overvalued, and that there is little fear that its guns will sweep the broad channel of the Canal de Haro with its many islands, of the almost uniform width of more than twenty miles.

"To the Editor of the *Mail*

Sir,—I have read with feelings of shame and indignation some recent articles on the San Juan question, copied from the *London Times*, &c., and forming the basis of several alarming leaders in the *Toronto Globe*. I am ashamed that writers who profess to lead public opinion should know so little of the facts of a case on which they reason so dogmatically, and inglorious to be told by them that our Dominion future is only a 'dream,' and that we are 'to creep to the ocean under the guns of an American fortress.'

I know San Juan well; I sailed outside of it in 1859; I visited it in Her Majesty's ship *Satellite*, when Captain Prevost took possession of its westerly shore. I have been around it, on it, and sailed by it dozens of times, and therefore, may be presumed to know of what I write.

In running from New Westminster or Burrard Inlet, steamers invariably pass through Plumper Pass, it being twenty miles from the mainland, and forty from Victoria, Vancouver Island. This Pass is navigable for the largest ship, I myself having been through it in a vessel of two thousand tons. Vessels going to the sea by this route need not go nearer San Juan than eight or ten miles, and the course is on the Vancouver Island, and not on the San Juan side. The sight from San Juan towards Vancouver Island, is broken by islands and over water exposed to heavy south east gales, and generally hazy. I have often and again stood, with others on deck of passing vessels and laughed at the fears then whispered, but now openly avowed, of American guns sweeping the Canal de Haro and driving British shipping from before them. But, granting all that is said of an opposite character, there are harbors on the mainland equal to Esquimaux; and Burrard Inlet, I presume, among that number. But how can we get to open? By the Straits of Georgia, thus evading the bugbear, San Juan, altogether. But that course says the *Globe*, is all but impracticable. The vessels of Her Majesty's navy and the Hudson's Bay ships and trading ships have gone that way from the memory of men, and the mail steamers of the United States, and war vessels too pass through these Straits to day on their way to and from Alaska. But admitting all this to prove these Straits impracticable, what about the long coast line and many harbors from the north end of Vancouver Island up to Fort Simpson and beyond? Our Dominion is on 'spent up Utica,' and it is

sheer folly, or something worse, to tell us that because San Juan goes to the Americans, our history as a Dominion is already written. It has too long been taken for granted that Victoria and Vancouver Island are, as the *Times* declares in effect British Columbia. We could let Vancouver Island go with San Juan, and yet survive the disaster. We have gold and silver, coal and lumber, harbors and fisheries, prairies and uplands, outside of Vancouver Island; and in spite of San Juan and the *Times*, we shall one day awake from our dream to find ourselves famous.

Yours, &c,

A. BROWNING.

Percy, Nov. 12, 1872.

THE TURRET SHIP HYDRA.

The *Hydra*, 4, double screw, iron armoured turret ship, 336 tons (2107 old measurement), 1625 indicated horse power (230 nominal), will leave the Clyde for Devonport on Wednesday. An account of a preliminary trial which took place on Thursday states that as she proceeded at a slow pace between the divisions of the Channel Fleet the turret was an object of great interest to the seamen on board the squadron ships, who crowded on deck to see her pass. After getting clear of the fleet, the *Hydra* steamed more rapidly, and went prettily through the water. She proceeded down channel, and had a very successful trial of her engines, attaining a speed of upwards of eleven knots an hour. In the evening she returned to her anchorage at the Tail of the Bank. This ship was constructed by Messrs. John Elder & Co., Fairfield, Govan. She is one of four armoured turret ships ordered by the Government in August, 1870, during the earlier stages of the Franco Prussian war. The design is not altogether a novel one, the *Cerberus* and *Magdala* having been built for the defence of the harbors of Melbourne and Bombay respectively, from plans, which were modified very slightly, for the four vessels. The ships of the *Hydra* class are intended for coast defence, hence they are not rigged, and have very shallow draft of water; besides which, the lowness of the freeboard, only three feet six inches, precludes them from keeping the sea with safety or comfort. The *Hydra* is a breastwork monitor, the chief feature in which is that above the upper deck—which is of 1½ inch iron and eight inches of teakwood—a breastwork is erected. It is constructed of one inch of iron, ten inches of teak, and then armour plates eight inches and nine inches thick, the deck above being of 1½ inch iron and 3½ inches of teak. Within this breastwork is fitted the steering wheel and engine, also the engines for turning the turrets, the latter revolving upon rollers on the upper deck inside either end of the breastwork, projecting to a height of about seventeen feet above it, and firing the guns over its surface. The only means of access to within the ship is from ladders on the deck of this breastwork, and the height at which entrance is obtained can be further increased by shutting up all the apertures as high as the flying deck,

which reaches to a height of ten feet above the breastwork, and extends from turret to turret. This ship is steered and otherwise navigated from this deck in fine weather, but, when necessary, the operations can be conducted inside the breastwork, the pilot, in this case, being stationed in an armoured raised tower, extending seventeen feet above the breastwork, and from which he can scan the horizon by means of narrow sight-holes cut in it. Owing to the peculiar construction of the *Hydra*, it is necessary to ventilate her artificially. The *Hydra* is 225 feet long, 45 feet broad, 16 feet depth of hold. At her load draught she will draw 15ft. 9in. The sides are protected by a belt of 8-inch armour above and 6-inch armour below the water line, fitted upon teak varying from 10 to 12 inches thick. This belt is 7 feet wide, and both armor and backing towards the extremities. The turrets are two in number, constructed of two thicknesses of 3 inch plate, and protected by armour plates 10 inches and 9 inches thick, fitted on backing 9 inches and 10 inches thick. Each turret carries 18-ton guns, firing projectiles weighing 400lbs., and consuming 6½lbs. of powder at each discharge. The turrets can be turned not only by steam engines but also by hand, in the event of the former breaking down or being damaged. The *Hydra* is being propelled by twin screws, worked by engines on Messrs. Elder's compound principle. She carries 280 tons of coal, which will enable her to steam about fifteen days continuously.—*Broad Arrow*.

The affidavit of President Watson, of the Erie Railway, avers that Company has cause of action against Gould for more than the sum of \$9,726,541, to which interest is to be added; that such cause of action arises from the fraudulent detention, embezzlement and misapplication of the money, and property of said Company.

The eight hundred tracklayers on the extension of the Winona and St. Peter Railroad have had communication cut off by a snowstorm since last Tuesday night. Fears were entertained for them, but it appears they are all right and not even suffering.

A meeting of Radicals, called for to day having been prohibited, trouble was expected, and troops were posted yesterday in the principal squares, and at all strong points in the city. The Radicals had yet made no move or attempt to resist the Government's order, and the city this morning is quiet.

BREAKFAST.—EPPS'S COCOA.—GRATEFUL AND COMFORTING.—The very agreeable character of this preparation has rendered it a general favorite. The *Civil Service Gazette* remarks:—"The singular success which Mr. Epps attained by his homoeopathic preparation of cocoa has never been surpassed by any experimentalist. By a thorough knowledge of the natural laws which govern the operations of digestion and nutrition, and by a careful application of the fine properties of well selected cocoa, Mr. Epps has provided our breakfast tables with a delicately flavoured beverage which may save us many heavy doctors' bills." Made simply with boiling water or milk. Sold by the Trade only in 1lb., ½lb., and ¼lb. tinned packets, labelled—JAMES EPPS & Co., Homoeopathic Chemists, London, England.