The Weekly British Colonist

Wednesday, December 22, 1869.

The Era Of Electricity and Steam and Iron.

The present may emphatically be denominated the era of scientific triumph. In this utilitarian age one watches jealously the encroachments which practical men are making on the poetry of nature. Electricity flashes the prices of grey shirtings through the caverns beneath the ocean, and in its profoundest depths Schiller's diver as likely as not would find his hands on the inevitable gutta-percha while groping for the jewelled cup. Having submerged Time under the billows of the Atlantic, the science-men went on to demolish Space, and the leagues of prairie, snow and waste that lie between the Missouri and the Pacific. The neighing of the steam-horse, as he careered madly across the continent seemed likely to scare romance from its last and safest refuge. Rival railway companies concerted an invasion of the happy home of hyperbole, where the unsophisticated children of nature revel in fancies as free as their institutions and manners, imagination limitless as their plains, talk tall as their mountains, imagery copious as their rivers, and humor stimulating as their salt licks. On Saturday we republished from the London *Times* a letter which, if all have not read all would do well to read. The writer forecasts a great revolution in marine locomotion. Iron is to take the place of wood, and steam is to take the place of wind. The ocean carrying trade of the world is to be performed by iron screw steamers. The great Cleveland seam, in Yorkshire, is to yield its five thousand million tons of ironstone, thirty-three per cent metal iron, and England is to become the shipyard of the world. Now all this is marvellous, but it is not unreasonable. Nay, it is morally certain that such a revolution is close at hand. Even now we see the old ocean trade round the Cape of Good Hope threatened by the Suez Canal, and that round Cape Horn equally jeopardised by the Darien Canal, and still more effectually by our own Northwest Passage, so long and eagerly sought, and so simply found. And this brings us to a part of the subject peculiarly interesting to us. To no country in the world can this new condition of things suggest more momentous interest than to British Columbia. If England has her Cleveland *seam* of ironstone, we have our *mountains* of that stone, yielding at least twice the percentage of metallic iron. But what is, perhaps, of greater, certainly of more immediate importance, we possess a monopoly of good harbors and good coal on the North Pacific. We hold in our hand the key to the great Northwest Passage. The influence of a nation, said Napoleon after fifteen years of Sovereignty, 'depends upon the number of men it is able to put under arms'—a doctrine which, if accepted, means the age of conquest is not over, that the ruinous competition of armaments must continue until every civilized subject is a drilled soldier. 'I believe,' said the man who made Prussia, 'that God is usually found on the side of the big battalions.' We believe the era of 'big battalions' is passing away—giving place to that of scientific conquest, when man runneth to and fro, and knowledge increaseth, and we venture to think that hereafter God will usually be found on the side of big coal measures and ironstone mountains. These deposits of nature are destined to become the great distributors of power, the arbiters of peace or war, the touchstones of national greatness. In this view what a glorious future opens up before us! Great Britain in Europe, with her boundless coal stores and her practically inexhaustible Cleveland seam of ironstone, still supreme in her manufactures and commerce. The Greater Britain of America, with her Northwest Passage, and with her iron and coal upon the two great oceans! It only remains for the Mother Country to realize the magnitude of her position and her duty, and to deal with the young empire in a spirit of appreciative liberality, and enlightened enterprise, in order to secure for these two kindred powers a proud pre-eminence under the coming dispensation—the era of coal and of iron.

Real Reform.

If one-half of what Dame Rumour saith be true, Governor Musgrave will have accomplished more real reform during the few weeks an unfortunate accident has confined him to his bed than was attained during the entire term of the administration of his predecessor. This comes of having at the head of affairs one who can *do* as well as *promise*—one who has the firmness to carry into effect measures which he has the sense to see are for the common good. This is as it should be. No matter how close at hand great political changes may be, it is clearly the true policy of the Governor to retrench and reform with as much zeal as though we were to remain a separate colony for another decade of years. When one looks back over the past six years, it is painful to reflect how precious time has been wasted, nay, worse than wasted. Had those measures of retrenchment and reform which the most ordinary prescience and administrative ability must have readily recognised as being demanded by the country followed immediately upon the ill-assorted union of these colonies, what a very different aspect would have been presented to-day. Governor Musgrave assumed the reins of power in this colony under circumstances both critical and trying; but at the same time, he could not well have come to us under circumstances better calculated to establish his reputation as a skilful administrator. He found the people worn out by fair promises and borne down by over-government; yet in that temper most favorable to the appreciation of a prompt, vigorous, and faithful administration. The people would prefer a vigorous personal government to an expensive, vacillating pseudo-representative one. Let his Excellency apply the pruning-knife with vigor and skill to the rank overgrowth which the Civil List has been permitted to attain under more than one administration; let the rusty doors be thrown open and the dank atmosphere of official inaction dissipated, and the colony will soon recover its wonted elasticity and buoyancy. Let the red-tape and the clogs, the dead-weights and the weus be removed, and the colony will soon right itself.

Treatment of Convicts.

The subject which forms our text this morning is one the full importance of which we are apt to think is not so generally realized among us as it ought to be. The proper treatment of those whom it may be deemed necessary for a season to deprive of that greatest of earthly blessings—personal liberty—is a subject which ordinarily receives very great attention at the hands of civilized governments. In this respect we are not to a wonderful extent following very much in the footsteps of those countries whose civilization we question, and whose institutions we condemn? Have not we of British Columbia taken a leaf from the penal code of a doubtful civilization? The chain-gang and the 'stocks'—and we are not sure but the pillory itself—these relics of a darker age, why have they been reproduced here? The object of all penal laws is or ought to be two-fold—the punishment of crime as a deterrent to others, and the reformation of the criminal himself. Whenever, in the general interest of society, a subject is deprived of his personal liberty and condemned to serve out a term of penal labor, three ideas are presented: The safety of society demands that he should not run at large; the general interest demands the punishment of crime as a wholesome deterrent, and the reformation of the criminal is deemed to be more readily attainable under such conditions as are presented by a well regulated convict life. Let us see how far these three objects are likely to be promoted by our present mode of treating convicts. Undeniably, the first object is attained; for the subject is equally deprived of personal liberty in that sense demanded by the safety of society whether he be continuously shut in from the world by four great walls, or trotted out to his daily toil in heavy chains. That the second object is also attained we are not prepared wholly to deny. Yet it is a question how far the practice of parading chained criminals before the public eye exerts that influence which is calculated to operate as a wholesome deterrent. The most eminent writers upon criminal jurisprudence have decided that public executions have a hardening and demoralising tendency; and hence the old argument that the greater publicity you give to the punishment of crime the more you increase its influence as a deterrent, falls to the ground. If this principle be correct in regard to the infliction of capital punishment, we believe it is equally correct in its application to the subject under immediate consideration. Nay, we think it applies with accumulative force in the case of the convict labourer. Although it has been asserted that some have been hanged more than once, it will be readily admitted that few criminals die more than once in expiation of offence against human law. Thus each criminal makes his appearance but once before the gaping, curious crowd. He steps upon the trap, is swung off—hangs for a brief space, is cut down and forever concealed from the public gaze. The whole disgusting performance occupies but a few moments, and all is over—over forever! Not has it been witnessed by unwilling eyes. But in the case of the convict in chaingang doomed, how very differentiate all these conditions. He is made a public exhibition of every day during the one, two, three, four, seven or fourteen years which measure out his sentence. Nor is he alone exposed to the gaze of morbid curiosity. The mother as she passes along the thoroughfare, is startled by the noise of clanking chains. She involuntarily turns her head and sees the shrinking convict. The delicate sister, as she trips along on a shopping expedition has her attention arrested, looks and sees the downcast convict. The tender girl, as she comes home from school with a lightsome hop and skip is compelled to look upon the chained convict. To what does all this parade of humanity in its very worst type tend? To deter and elevate others? Do we send our sons and daughters into the company of the profane swearer, the coarse, the hardened and the lewd in order that they may be elevated and refined? No. This constant looking at the criminal, whether it be voluntary or accidental, can only tend to blunt and familiarize. The tendency of our system is demoralizing to the on-looker in the same sense that public executions are, but in a far more extended degree. The third and last object ever to be kept in view in enlightened and Christian criminal jurisprudence is the reformation of the criminal himself. Let us see how far this most important object is likely to be attained under our system. On this point we could wish to dwell. If, as we have just been endeavouring to show, all this public parade is calculated to have a demoralizing and pernicious influence in so far as the on-looker is concerned, what must its influence be upon the mind and heart of the convict himself? Need we employ many words in order to show that its whole tendency can only be to sear his soul—his heart, his mind, as with a hot iron? Reclaim the criminal? Rather educate him down to a hell-hound. It would, indeed, be difficult to conceive of any system of punishment better calculated to tear from the soul the last shred of virtue or manly ambition. In this colony, where first offences—petty larceny sometimes—are frequently punished by a term in the chain gang, the consequences are fearful to contemplate. How often has a first offence been committed under circumstances which would give ground for reasonable hope that, with proper treatment and careful culture of the still remaining good parts the wanderer might be reclaimed and restored, with safety and advantage, to society? But what are we doing now? We are stamping out, burning out every germ of virtue, and forcing into luxuriant growth the seeds of hell. We thrust him into a dank and dismal cell at night, possibly the associate or bed-fellow of some hardened old jail-bird, and we take him forth in the morning to be photographed on the memory of virtue. Thus disciplined during the term of his sentence, the gates of pandemonium are thrown open and one more fiend walks to and fro over the earth seeking whom he may devour. This infernal schools of ours usually numbers about a score of pupils. Great results may not unreasonably be expected from the early possession of such an institution in this young colony. It may be thought that we have employed unnecessarily strong language; but this is not the first, nor the second, nor the third time we have directed attention to the subject. Nor has it been unnoticed and the system uncommented in our Legislative Halls. But still it remains unameliorated, continues to do, quietly but surely, its fatal work. The remedy, what is it? Is it within our reach? Yes. Under that political change which we conceive to be imminent, the Federal Government assumes the responsibility of providing and maintaining penitentiaries, and those of our readers who may have visited the penitentiary at Kingston will readily admit that Canada behind to no country in the treatment of convicts. In our case it would, of course, be necessary to have a penitentiary situated on this side of the Rocky Mountains, inasmuch as the expense and risk involved in transportation to Kingston would form more than a set-off to the expense of providing a local establishment. Thus do we get over the principal difficulties with which the question of a remedy for the evil to which we have been alluding was formerly surrounded. This is one of the many subjects that ought not to be overlooked, when the basis of union comes to be considered.

Thursday Dec 16th

THE NEW ZEALAND QUESTION.—Lord Carnarvon has written a very moderate, sensible and statesmanlike letter to the *Times* upon the unhappy difficulty which has arisen between New Zealand and the Colonial Office. His Lordship would appear to have hit the happy medium. His letter may be thus epitomised:—The colonists, no doubt, were originally to blame, though there may have been faults on both sides. They refused to pay for Imperial troops, and voluntarily repudiated all assistance or interference on the part of the Home Government. But they have now altered their tone—they ask and will pay for Imperial troops. Vicarious justice, the Home Government is no doubt justified in still adhering to the decision which the colonists of their own free act forced upon it. But rigorous logic ought not to govern the question. There are other far weightier considerations. The Mother Country ought not to throw away the loyalty and affection of her children. She is bound to give to her own flesh and blood the help she has often given to less deserving strangers, especially as she can do so without risk of pecuniary loss.

MORE coal has been brought from the wreck of the Cowper.

ARCHBISHOP CONNOLLY ON SIR J. YOUNG.—At the Halifax banquet given to Sir John Young, Archbishop Connolly explained why he had taken so active a part in the festivities. Amongst other things he said:—'I am here to-night to offer an Irishman's welcome to the man who, during the whole of a long and chequered life, proved himself to be the Irishman's friend all over the globe. No sooner was our magnificent cathedral burned down in Australia than Sir John Young, himself a Protestant, was the very first man to come to the rescue and to call on his fellow Protestants everywhere to help the Catholics in the hour of their desolation. He has not only condescended to become chairman at a public meeting for that purpose, but he headed the subscription list with a hundred pounds as a first instalment, and has made a speech that has immortalized his name at home and abroad. There may be other Catholics of Irish extraction, either ignorant of the merits of the case or stolid enough not to pay respect to such a man, but for my part I should be recreant to every principle of honor, I could not have an Irish heart within my breast, if I did not do everything within my power to be simply grateful. I am here, too, because as an Irishman I feel proud to see a fellow-countryman in so distinguished a position, and qualified for it by every virtue of head and heart that can do honor to human nature.'

ASSAY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA QUARTZ AT SAN FRANCISCO.—The Active on the down trip a month ago, took away 2300 pounds of quartz rock for assay at San Francisco. The rock was taken from a lead on the coast of the mainland close to Bella Bella, by Mr M. Moss. On the return of the Active the Assayer's return was received, viz: Value of gold per ton, $22 33; value of silver $8 48—total value of ore per ton, $30 81. Samples of the same rock assayed at the Bank of British North America in this city yielded from 6 oz to 31 oz to the ton. The San Francisco assayers say that the rock contains 82 per cent. of sulphurets, which have no means of working. Hence the test is not satisfactory. Mr Moss will send from 30 to 50 tons of the ore to Swansea, England, for assay, by first ship.

PROGRESS IN JAPAN.—Japan is going ahead. A railroad is to be built from Kobe to Osaca and a telegraph from Jeddo to Yokohama. A new mint is about to be established by the government and a general system of education under foreign teaching. These movements mark the positive inauguration of a new age of civilization and progress in Japan, and China too. The barriers which for thousands of years have excluded from those populous and productive nations all 'outside barbarians' are broken down, and in Japan and China the governing authorities and classes are leading the way to the introduction in army, navy, (steam-navy, communications) trade, education, &c. of all the modern improvements of the powerful 'barbarians of the West.'

ARRIVAL FROM SITKA.—The U.S. revenue cutter Lincoln, Capt Evans, from Sitka on the 1st inst., arrived at 9 o'clock last evening. The Lincoln touched at Nanaimo, where she found the steamship Constantine from Sitka, on the 5th, scaling for Port Townsend. Met the Newbery on Sunday night, 20 miles south of Port Rupert. The Lincoln was upwards of 12 days in getting to Nanaimo, in consequence of head winds and want of fuel. Mr D. M. Murphy, editor of the Alaska *Times*, came as passenger. The Lincoln is announced to leave at 2 o'clock this morning for San Francisco.

THE PUGET SOUND CO.—The New York *Tribune* says—It is known that the British Government is highly satisfied with the recent award made by the joint commission for adjusting the claims of the Hudson Bay and Puget Sound Coy. Although the award does not amount to one tenth of the sum originally demanded. It intimates that this result will render the British Government more disposed to have the Alabama claims finally settled.

NEW BOOKS.—Hibben & Co. have laid on our table three charming books for young readers and quite appropriate gifts at this joyous season. 'The Golden Dawn,' by 'May Wentworth;' 'The Candy Elephant,' by Miss Dulliver, and 'Phebe Travers, or one year at a French Board ng School,' comprise the interesting lot. The books are elegantly bound, and are from the well-known house of Roman & Co., San Francisco, who are also the publishers of many other select and standard works.

BEAUTIFUL.—Hibben & Co. are the possessors of a copy of Holy Writ illustrated by the renowned French artist Gustave Dore. The plates are lifelike and as a specimen of typographic beauty, the work is unequalled. The cost of the book in England is fifteen guineas. What a beautiful and appropriate Christmas present the book would be.

WILD BEASTS.—On Tuesday Weir, of Metchosin, brought in the heads of a wolf and panther, which had been shot near his place. Yesterday, from Peer's, in Metchosin, a panther's head was brought in. In each case $10 was paid by the Police Magistrate to the sheooters.

THE ship Nation's Hope, bound for the B. C. & V. I. Mills, arrived yesterday afternoon. The Nation's Hope sailed from San Francisco on the 3rd in company with the Glimpse. Off Cape Flattery, on Saturday last, she experienced a terrible Southeaster which blew her off the coast. The Nation's Hope will be towed to the Mills to-day.

THE BARK RUBY.—Another effort was to have been made by H.M.S. Sparrowhawk yesterday afternoon to get the Ruby off—with what success we have not learned. The Ruby lies imbedded in about six feet of shingle or gravel. She makes no water and it is believed she has sustained no injury.

COME DOWN FOR REPAIRS.—The well known tug Isabel, property of the B. C. & V. I. Mill Company, arrived on Tuesday night from Burrard Inlet with one passenger—Capt. Raymur. The Isabel having got rather the worst of an encounter with the rocks in English Bay, some months since, has been brought down to undergo a surgical operation at the yard of Doctor Laing.

BURRARD INLET.—The barkentine Adele and the brig Coquette are loading at Moody's. The bark Maud Ellen is loading at the B. C. & V. I mills. The cargo is all ready, but is being taken in slowly.

FROSTBITE.—A Whitepiner, suffering from frostbite in one of his feet, was admitted to the Royal Hospital yesterday. The toes of the member have been amputated. The bite was contracted while the patient was prospecting in the White Pine mountains.

ROBINSON'S MAGIC SOAP will soon be manufactured at the Welch Brewery building, James Bay—the building having been secured for the purpose. Welch, the builder of the brewery, is now a practising physician (!) in San Francisco.

John Stuart Mill on the Chinese Immigration Problem.

John Stuart Mill has addressed the following letter to a San Francisco gentleman—

AVIGNON, France, Oct. 23, 1869.

DEAR SIR—The subject on which you have asked my opinion involves two of the most difficult and embarrassing questions of political morality—the extent and limits of the right of those who have first taken possession of an unoccupied portion of the earth's surface to exclude the remainder of mankind from inhabiting it, and the means which can be legitimately used by the more improved branches of the human species to protect themselves from being painfully encroached upon by those of a lower grade in civilization. The Chinese immigration into America raises both these questions. To furnish a general answer to either of them would be a most arduous undertaking.

Concerning the purely economical view of the subject I entirely agree with you—and it could hardly be better stated and argued than it is in your able article in the New York *Tribune*. That the Chinese immigration, if it attains great dimensions, must be economically injurious to the mass of the present population—that it must diminish their wages and reduce them to a lower stage of physical comfort and wellbeing, I have no manner of doubt. Nothing can be more fallacious, than the attempts to make out that this to lower wages is the way to raise them, or that there is any compensation in an economical point of view to those whose labor is displaced or who are obliged to work for a greatly reduced remuneration. On general principles this state of things, were it sure to continue, would justify the exclusion of the immigrants on the ground that, with their habits in respect to population, only a temporary good is done to the Chinese people by admitting part of their surplus numbers, while a permanent harm is done to a more civilized and improved portion of mankind.

But there is much also to be said on the other side. Is it justifiable to assume that the character and habits of the Chinese are unsusceptible of improvement? The institutions of the United States are the most potent means that have yet existed of spreading the most important elements of civilization down to the poorest and most ignorant of the laboring masses. If every Chinese child were compulsorily brought under your school system, or under a still more effective one, if possible, and kept under for a sufficient number of years, would not the Chinese population be in time raised to the level of the Americans? I believe, indeed, that hitherto the number of Chinese born in America has not been very great; but so long as this is the case—so long (that is) as the Chinese do not come in families and settle, but those who come are mostly men and return to their native country, the evil can hardly reach to great a magnitude as to require that it should be put a stop to by force.

One kind of restrictive measure seems to me not only desirable, but absolutely called for, the most stringent laws against introducing Chinese immigrants as coolies, i.e. under contracts binding them to the service of particular persons. All such obligations are a form of compulsory labor, that is, of slavery, and though I know that the legal invalidity of such contracts does not prevent them from being made, I cannot but think that if pains were taken to make it known to the immigrants that such engagements are not legally binding, and especially if it were made a penal offence to enter into them, that mode at least of immigration would receive a considerable check, and it does not seem probable that any other mode, among so poor a population as the Chinese, can attain such dimensions as to compete very injuriously with American labor. Short of that point the opportunity given to numerous Chinese of becoming familiar with better and more civilized habits of life, is one of the best chances that can be opened up for the improvement of the Chinese in their own country, and one which it does not seem to me that it would be right to withhold from them. I am, dear sir,

Yours very sincerely, J. S. MILL.

To Henry George, Esq., San Francisco.

HOLLOWAY'S PILLS.—Fever, Influenza.—For the subjugation of disease and the preservation of health, it is all important to maintain the purity of the blood, and to keep its channels clear, that no coldness nor obstructions shall impede the life-sustaining current. By these means are Holloway's Pills all powerful in restoring and protecting the human frame, and freeing it from fevers, inflammations, congestions, neuralgic and gouty pains, in short, from the many dangerous maladies arising from debility. A pure condition of blood is security for life and health; when it is right the nerves are in excellent condition, and on the other, harmony, and completeness of these systems, depend the perfection of life, energy, health, and happiness. 1

BREAKFAST.—EPPS'S COCOA.—GRATEFUL AND COMFORTING.—'By a very agreeable character of this preparation has rendered its general use by the civil service.' Gazette.—'The singular success with which Mr Epps has attained by his homœopathic 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 flavored beverage which may save us many heavy doctors' bills.' Made simply with boiling water or milk. Sold by the trade only in ½lb., ¼lb., ⅛lb. tin-lined packets, labled—JAMES EPPS & Co., Homœopathic Chemists, London, England. 1875 tfuasa