

The Colonist.

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THE SEMI-WEEKLY COLONIST

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GROVER CLEVELAND.

Stephen Grover Cleveland, ex-President of the United States, died Wednesday. He was seventy-one years of age. He occupied a unique position in public life in that country, for he was the only man ever elected twice to the Presidency with a term intervening between his elections. Until his retirement from the Presidency in 1897 he had been continuously in public life from early manhood, having occupied many positions of high honor and low citizens. He was a man of much ability and force of character, and in all his positions discharged his duty honestly and with the utmost integrity.

The most conspicuous act of his public career was his message to Congress in connection with the boundary dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela, in which he took the position that the question ought to be settled by arbitration and that any other course, if adopted by Great Britain, would be regarded by the United States as an unfriendly act. It is not possible to excuse the terms in which this view was set out in the message, and there have been some explanations offered for the language, which need not be repeated here. It is sufficient to say that the British Government did not feel called upon to pay any attention to the phraseology used by Mr. Cleveland, and accepted the suggestion of arbitration. There were certain explanations whispered in diplomatic circles at the time, which afforded an explanation of Mr. Cleveland's extraordinary manner of doing a perfectly proper act. It may be added that the result of the arbitration was to give Great Britain all she claimed.

A very large and influential section of the Democratic party, with which Mr. Cleveland was associated, never approved of his general policy, and the Democratic Convention of 1896, which nominated Mr. Bryan, refused to endorse his administration, the chief objection taken being his attitude on the question of currency. Mr. Cleveland having been an opponent of the free coinage of silver, and his going down in history as a great administrator, although he ranks well with the other presidents who were above mediocrity. This is not because he lacked statesmanship, but because of the irony of fate he was in advance of his time by at least twenty years. The country was ready to accept from Mr. Roosevelt it would not take from Mr. Cleveland. We are disposed to think that his influence upon the evolution of public opinion in the United States was greater than appears on the surface.

Personally he was a man of robust habits, and very practical. His marriage in 1885, or three months after his first inauguration to Miss Frances Folsom was an incident of unusual popular interest. If we are not mistaken he was the only president of the United States to be married while in office. It had been supposed that he was a confirmed bachelor, for he was in his forty-ninth year at the time of his marriage. Miss Folsom was a young woman of exceptional attractiveness and intelligence, and was perhaps the most popular mistress which the White House ever had. She survives him.

A PROSPECTIVE INDUSTRY.

The Colonist had a news item yesterday in regard to a proposal made by the E. & N. Railway Company to clear a part of the land belonging to the company in connection with a project for the manufacture of turpentine on a large scale. The suitability of Douglas fir for the manufacture of turpentine has been demonstrated. About two years ago some experiments were carried on under the direction of the late E. G. Russell, which gave excellent results. Associated with Mr. Russell in the enterprise was a gentleman of large means, who appears to have changed his mind about his investment in the necessary plant. Harper's Weekly says that "the turpentine problem will soon come to the front." The chief source of supply has been the pine forests of the Southern States, but the best sections have been worked out and the turpentine distillers are working on the last frontier—the barrens of the Central Pacific Peninsula. Seeing, therefore, that the demand for turpentine is increasing, and the present source of supply is on the verge of exhaustion, there is every reason to suppose that the forests of this province will be drawn upon. As we understand the matter, in the manufacture of turpentine a great deal of wood, of no other commercial value except as fuel, can be used, and if this is the case the establishment of extensive turpentine distillers on Vancouver Island will be the means of employing labor and turning to valuable account a natural product of very little value for any other purpose. In addition to this the railway can secure the clearing of such parts of its domain as are suited to this culture, the gain to the province will be very great. We hope, therefore, to be able to report that the proposal above mentioned will be brought to a successful conclusion.

RAILWAY ROUTES.

In his speech at Toronto Sir Thomas Shaughnessy laid great stress upon the desirability of developing Canadian transportation along East and West lines. It seems to be understood in some well-informed quarters that this is a well-considered project, and that the construction of any new lines that will be feeders to the Great Northern. Mr. James J. Hill has for some years represented his policy to be the construction of a railway from Winnipeg to the Pacific coast, connecting with Victoria by a ferry, but as yet nothing has been done in this respect. A representative from British Columbia has practically to give up his private business, unless he is fortunate enough to be so

are necessarily simply feeders of his main line in the United States. These facts lead the Montreal Gazette to say: "But not a mile of this east-and-west line has yet been built. If it ever is built, it will probably turn out to be no more than a series of Canadian links between the branches thrown out from the trunk of his Great Northern system to rake traffic into the latter from this side of the border. These branches, tapping the Canadian coast trade, Canadian coal fields, Canadian silver-lead deposits, Canadian ranching lands and wheat areas are 'feeders' of the Hill roads in the United States, and 'suckers' of the territory tributary to our own through railways. If these branches are ever threaded together by an east-and-west Hill line on this side of the border it will be for the better pumping of traffic from Canadian sources into American routes. Nobody supposes that Mr. Hill would be willing to be a mere freight-gatherer for the Canadian Pacific, the Canadian Northern, and the Grand Trunk Pacific railways, turning over to them the burden of the business. He could more easily and profitably feed his north-and-south lines to the Great Northern road and its eastern connections. It is these north-and-south lines that must remain the strategic ones of his Canadian mileage. They spring from most productive United States sources, as well as from most productive Canadian sources, and are well adapted to do large business both ways. We must remember that Mr. Hill is an ardent advocate of commercial prosperity. With him this is purely a railway policy. If the Canadian market were unprotected, the earning power of his international lines would be immensely increased, for they would have the hauling of the great part of the manufactured goods purchased by the people of the Western provinces, as they would have their share of the hauling out of our Western farm products. North-and-south running roads extending from country from a base in the United States can never be the constructive lines this country wants. Canada must be served by something better than the branch lines cast out, ribbon from the spine of United States through lines that built up the United States into a country of tremendous wealth production, and it is the arteries through which our trade with our commerce between our Eastern and our Western provinces, and the trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific countries passes in and out.

These views are certainly very interesting and we think important. The Colonist is greatly interested in the question of many routes of transportation as possible, but it has never been willing to support those who are designed to withdraw business from Canadian cities. The wealth of Canada is not to be based on the coast. The cities to the south are larger than ours and more wealthy. There will necessarily always be more or less of a species of commercial gravitation exerted by a nation of eighty millions upon one of less than twenty millions. The population ought not to adopt a policy of non-intercourse, or anything resembling it, but it seems to be clearly the duty of the Canadian people to strengthen the hands of those who are carrying the progress of Canada by the most direct routes, or at least not to offer any assistance to those who would divert business from the coast. Shaughnessy's views have doubtless been influenced to some degree by the interests of the province over which he presides, but they are none the less of importance to the whole country.

THE CANADIAN NAVY.

The Toronto branch of the Navy League has decided to offer a prize of \$400 for the best essay on the subject: "Shall Canada have a Navy of Her Own." The competition will shortly be advertised. The intention is to have the prize open to all who are interested in the subject, and to have a free hand in answering the question, and would suppose that one of the difficulties to be met by the prize-winners is to have the awarding of the prize to be overcome any preference they may have as to the subject. The question ought to be answered. If the best essay should not take a view of the subject with which the judges happened to agree, its chances of success would be greatly handicapped. But be this as it may, the work of preparing such an essay is very great, and those who take an interest in the question will doubtless be willing to take the chance of a favorable decision. The League has taken a step which can hardly fail to arouse interest in the subject, and which the people of Canada have as yet given very little serious consideration.

PARLIAMENTARY DELAYS.

The inexcusable waste of time in the conduct of the business of the Dominion Parliament is certain to be productive of mischief. While neither political party is free from responsibility in the premises, the chief fault lies with the government, for it is idle to claim that if the administration of affairs had been what it ought to have been, the Opposition would have dared to occupy so much time as has been in dilatory tactics, and in criticisms of ministers and their work. It is a fact that very little of the work of the session has been in connection with matters of legislation. Indeed as a rule the Bills are disposed of with a minimum of debate. Many of them are so thoroughly thrashed out in special or standing committees that there is nothing much to be said about them in the House. Supply necessarily takes up considerable time, because there is, and there always ought to be, a pretty thorough discussion of past expenditure and future appropriations, but it must have been noted by every one who has followed the proceedings of the House of Commons, that the time spent in the actual discussion of items of expenditure is not great. The most of it is consumed with matters that would report that the proposals above mentioned will be brought to a successful conclusion. Hence we say that the responsibility rests chiefly with the Government.

But it is not so much the question of responsibility of which we wish to speak as of the serious consequences of the frightful waste of time. Parliament has been more than six months in session, and there does not seem to be much prospect of its business being concluded before the expiry of eight months. At least there is sufficient business now in sight to keep the House together for nearly two months. It is properly attended to, for as a matter of fact the principal legislation of the session has yet to be done. Sessions of such length almost preclude the entrance of a right kind of people into public life. A representative from British Columbia has practically to give up his private business, unless he is fortunate enough to be so

stated that his private affairs can take care of themselves with a minimum of personal supervision. There is not a British Columbia member of the House of Commons who is not financially poorer because of his occupancy of a seat in that body, than if he does not use his public position to his private advantage, and the province has no desire to be represented by people of whom that is true. The same remark holds good of the Western members, or if any of them could not, then it is questionable if they are of the class that ought to represent the province. Possibly a good many of the members from the Eastern provinces do not find the length of the session any serious encumbrance. They are near home, and those of them that have any important business can easily find time to attend to it, and yet even in their case, the man, whose services the country ought to have, will not be willing to give up seven or eight months every year to the province, and we mean profitless in a public sense, as most sessions are nowadays. It is the public welfare that is at stake, and something was done to shorten the sessions, and we think the first step is to put it on a debate, but to put it on a debate.

Victoria themselves—that this is destined to be a large and flourishing city and that the growth and expansion of our observance are to continue uninterruptedly. Dr. Tolmie, who has just returned from a tour of interior points, expresses the opinion that we may look forward to an exceptionally large attendance at the forthcoming Fall Fair in this city. He was quite surprised at the amount of interest aroused in the event. With new buildings, and the financial affairs of the Agricultural Association in a sound and healthy condition, we should, therefore, with a special effort, be able to score even a greater success this year than in the past.

Inland revenue figures show an enormous growth in the cigarette habit among Canadians. While we have every sympathy with those reformers who are bending their efforts in the direction of restricting the use of tobacco in all its forms, we do not believe the prevalence of the cigarette habit imposes to any large extent, except among boys, the health or morals of the people of this country. The attitude of social reformers, however, directed with greater force to the eradication of some evils which are not to be regarded as more dangerous character.

The statement that an international steel trust with a capital of \$150,000,000 has been formed is reiterated. These gigantic mergers do not always work out so well as they are planned on paper. A few years ago all competition in ocean steamship traffic was destroyed by the formation of a gigantic combine for which Pierpont Morgan, et al. were responsible, but it fell to pieces shortly after its formation. This proposed steel trust seems too huge an affair to permit of successful organization and management.

The Provincial government in pursuance of the aggressive advertising policy it has embarked upon to make more widely known the attractions and possibilities of British Columbia, has despatched Mr. R. Palmer, commissioner of horticulture, to Calgary, where the Dominion fair is being held, to make a comprehensive exhibit. The province is fortunate in being able to command the services of one possessing the high ability of Mr. Palmer, who as envoy to England in the same capacity earned an enviable reputation in his negotiations with the result of his visit to Calgary the country will benefit to a marked degree.

The Montreal Gazette very justly points out that the reference of the question of over-classification on the National Transcontinental Railway to arbitration proves that there must be something to arbitrate, from which it is evident that the government has made a sort of withdrawal of what he charged, there is something that may be found out to be wrong. Meanwhile, the government has managed to shelter the Commissioners, which was the real object of the appointment of the special committee, as shown by the remark of Mr. Carvell, one of its members, who said "Of course, we know there is nothing wrong."

Any announcement tending of the formation of plans to expedite the process of clearing the lands of Vancouver Island is of exceeding interest, and it is evident that Mr. C.P.R. for an arrangement which will permit of the gentleman mentioned co-operating to that end. The matter of placing this island, which is at present only sparsely populated, is one of such vital importance to the province that it devolves upon the provincial government to extend some measure of aid in its duty to encourage the clearing of land, whether the land be private property or otherwise. On first consideration of the question it might appear absurd to suggest any such course of action on the part of the government of the province in respect to land privately owned, but when it is remembered that the difficulties in the way of land clearing are a large scale on this island are very great, and that every new settler represents an increase in the assets and self-earning power of the country, the idea is one at least worthy of the little consideration. The supply of cheap blasting powder was a business-like step, but it is possible that the Minister of Finance and Agriculture, if he devotes his practical mind to the subject might discover some other way of assisting in such work. Of course we do not suggest that the government should help the railway company.

In the Commons on Tuesday, Mr. Oliver, in moving the second reading of a bill to amend and consolidate the Dominion laws relating to the land available for agriculture in the Canadian northwest is over 100,000,000 million acres, to say nothing of the immense area further north, whose possibilities for agriculture, no one can yet estimate. And yet we talk about the "rilling up" of the Northwest. Why, it is clear from the amazing figures quoted by Mr. Oliver that "the Northwest" so called, could swallow up the entire population of Canada and then yawn for millions more to come and fill its fertile land. A consideration of these things is needed in order for us to arrive at any conception whatever of how tremendous the problem of developing Western Canada. It is one which for years to come will engage the attention of our wisest statesmen.

The optimist is always on the firing line. Who can doubt that this is Victoria's growing time? Why, we have outgrown our school and water supply, and now the city electrician reports that we have outgrown our lighting. It appears that about the only things that we are not taking are the attractions of our scenery and climate. King Alfonso of Spain is a happy man on the advent of a prince, who thus double secures the throne. King Alfonso's reign has thus far been characterized by excellent taste and judgment in all his decisions, and which he has played a part, and he is deservedly, one of the most popular monarchs in Europe, and therefore the congratulations which will pour in upon him upon the birth of another son will be as sincere as universal. The announcement that a United States theatrical syndicate will erect vaudeville theatre in this city, costing \$50,000, is another proof of the conviction which has seized outsiders of a larger extent than the people of

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