

## The Colonist.

FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 1893.

## THE WRONG PRINCIPLE.

We see by the "Orders of the Day" that Mr. Brown intends to move the insertion in Bill No. 34 of a section which will establish manhood and residential suffrage in the municipality of New Westminster, and which provides that the elector will be able to vote in only one ward. This is indeed a radical measure, and puts Mr. Brown as regards voting power on a level with his stable boy, provided that stable boy is a British subject of full age and has paid his taxes.

By this we conclude that Mr. Brown's idea of a municipality is that it is a political body in which all the members have equal rights and powers. Is this the correct idea? Is a municipality not rather of the nature of a joint stock concern in which the power of the stockholders is in proportion to the number of shares they hold? Would it be fair, for instance, if the holder of one share in a banking company should claim to have as great voting power as the owner of a hundred shares? In this case the injustice is so apparent that it can be readily seen by the shallowest demagogue. Well, we ask, is it at all fair that Mr. Brown's stable boy, who can neither read nor write, and who does not possess a single dollar's worth of property within the city's limits, shall have the same voting power in the choice of the men to manage the affairs of the municipality as Mr. Brown, who is, by our hypothesis, a man of ability and intelligence, and who possesses property in every ward of the city?

It does not require a very profound thinker to see that whether the city is well or ill governed, heavily or lightly taxed, whether it has the improvements it needs or whether it is decided it shall go without them, whether the officials are capable and honest or incapable and dishonest, are matters about which the illiterate, penniless stable boy takes little thought, while they affect the rich and intelligent Mr. Brown most seriously and are to him of the deepest concern. Then, too, the vote of the ignorant stable boy can be influenced by any blatant demagogue who tells him what he believes to be a fine story, or worse still, it may be bought with a price. As at the polls his vote counts for as much as that of the man who is most deeply interested in the welfare of the city, and who is well able to judge of what is best for its good. While it is right that the stable boy who contributes to the revenue of the municipality should have a voice in the management of the municipality's affairs, it is surely unreasonable to place him, unlettered as he is, with so small an interest in the concern, on a level with intelligent men who are seriously affected by the good or bad management of the corporation's affairs.

It is, in our opinion, a mistake to hold that cities should be governed on political principles. Properly considered the corporation of a city is as much a business concern as an electric light company or a railway company. What have politics to do with making the streets of a city or with keeping them in repair, with its drainage, with supplying it with water, with lighting it, with keeping it clean with the other work which a city corporation has to do? Is it not reasonable to maintain that those who pay the most towards the several services, and who have the greatest interest in having the corporation's duties well performed, should have the greatest influence in choosing the men who are to do the city's business? Of course there should be a limit to the influence of property in the management of a city's affairs, but allowing it even its full proportion of voting power would not, we believe, be so injurious to the welfare of a municipality as depriving it of all power and placing the representation on the basis of manhood alone. In no other business combination is the principle of manhood alone recognized, and we cannot see why it should be the sole basis of representation in New Westminster or in any other city.

Universal manhood suffrage as applied to cities has not been such a success in the United States that we should desire to import it into the city government of this Dominion. The corporation of nearly every large city in the United States is a sink of iniquity. Corruption is general and so rampant that it hardly takes the trouble to put on a disguise. Men of character and standing as a rule give civil politics a wide berth, and when they do interfere in affairs it is to endeavor to remedy the evils which the representatives elected by universal suffrage and the bosses who manipulate the popular vote have brought upon the citizens.

## A HARD LOT.

A thoughtful correspondent has kindly sent us a copy of the Salisbury Times and South Wales Gazette. The editorial of this paper is by no means pleasant reading. It is, in fact, not an editorial at all. It is an inquiry into the condition of the Wiltshire laborer, and ends with a pathetic and powerful appeal by the editor to the Bishop of the diocese, the clergy and the gentry of the county, to be more liberal than they have hitherto been to the laborer.

The immediate cause of the appeal was the lowering of the wages of the laborers of Wiltshire from eleven shillings a week to ten shillings. This deduction seems to have been the last straw that was required to break the spirit of the unhappy men who were employed in tilling the soil of the county of Wiltshire. It must be, to the great majority of Canadians, a mystery how a man can keep his wife and children from starving on two dollars and sixty seven cents a week. The pittance seems horribly insufficient.

silent, and one does not wonder when he hears that taking twenty-four cents from it filled the hearts of the laborers and their friends with despair.

The editor of the Salisbury Times tried to find out how the people managed to exist on ten shillings a week. He asked a laborer whom he visited, how he contrived to make ten shillings a week feed himself, his wife and three children. We give the reply from the editor's narrative:

"Live," says he, "it isn't living; it's starving. It's a mystery how we do live! 'Yes,' chimed in the woman, 'very often I sit down to a piece of dry bread and an onion.'"

"Nonsense," I said. "Yes, sir, it's quite true, and how can we poor 'bills' get anything else out of ten shillings a week out of it?"

"Oh, you have paid a shilling a week for that you have to pay house rent out of ten shillings a week?"

"Yes, and master docks the rent every reckoning night—once a fortnight, you know."

"Do you rent off the farmer or the land owner?"

"Oh, of the farmer, but some of them rent under the 'Squire'."

She resumes the tale of what she has lived after she has paid for the 'hovel,' though it is a mystery how she does it. She says she is not a shanty altogether, to be despised. She has more than some; for we can't starve with the cold, and 'long this time of year you can't wash the clothes and keep yourself warm at much less than eighteen pence a week. That leaves us seven and sixpence for bread, a little tea, sugar, lights, and all the things you want in a house, and to provide clothes for us five."

"Tell me how you manage to live upon it."

Into more minute details she couldn't go. It is a mystery how she does it, but there they had to go for three days together without tasting a bit of meat. Of course, he has an allotment still, that has to be paid for, and he has to put something into it or he gets a very poor crop. A half-hour he has passed and the man is fidgeting look- ing at the clock, which points to ten minutes to one, and he has to be back on the farm, about half a mile distant, by one o'clock.

It is no wonder that this man wore "a heavy, dull, despairing look," and that he had become almost reckless. When it is considered that there are thousands upon thousands of men in almost the same condition, it is no wonder that the demagogue and the socialist finds in Great Britain multitudes to listen to their inflammatory appeals and their plausible theories. The wonder is that the people are so patient, and that they bear their hard lot so quietly.

The present, as every one knows, is a time of great agricultural depression in Great Britain, but times are not surely so hard that the men who work the land and produce as much of the food of England as is raised at home, must be compelled to live on the wrong side of the line of starvation.

Suffering for want of proper and sufficient food is, however, a new thing among the Wiltshire farm laborers. For the editor says the statement that his condition is very much improved and that it is still improving, that as compared with the 'rough' days of Protection, reminiscent of barley bannocks, the Wiltshire laborer is a hundred per cent. better off than he was. "Is it, we must confess, from the editor's own description, hard to conceive what must have been the state of the Wiltshire farm laborer when it was fifty per cent. less tolerable than it is now. It is cheering to find, too, that the improvement is still going on. Let us hope that this amelioration will be both general and rapid, for it would appear to us that the existence of so much misery and suffering cannot but be dangerous to the state.

A PRUDENT PUGILIST.

It appears that Mitchell the pugilist is wise in his generation. He has no idea of contributing to the amusement of the American public, and of standing any number of hard knocks on the mere chance of his winning the fight. The Toronto Mail says: "He wishes to arrange for a respectable sum of money to be paid him whether he wins or whether he loses in his coming battle. This must certainly disqualify him in the eyes of sportsmen from being placed on a very high pinnacle of approbation."

It seems to us that the said sportsman are very selfish and very unreasonable if they expect Mitchell to be pounded almost to a jelly for their delectation without his being sure of something substantial in return. He gets up the show for them, for if they did not take a delight in seeing men pounding each other's bodies and smashing each other's faces, and in reading about such pounding and smashing, it would not be worth Mitchell's while to adopt the profession of pugilist. It is they who have created the profession, and they ought to be liberal enough to support it handsomely. They ought in reason to pay both combatants, and to give the one that loses more money, if anything, than the man who wins. The winner gets the praise and the admiration of the sporting fraternity and the lion's share of the money besides, while the loser gets the pounding and the discredit, but very little cash. Yet he is as necessary to the exhibition as the victor. Without him there would have been no match, and consequently no fun. Then let him be paid by all means. Mitchell showed his discretion in wanting to get well paid whatever the result of the event may be.

MARRIED.

BARTLETT-NIGHTINGALE—On Thursday, February 24, at St. John's church, Shawinigan, George Bartlett, of South Cowichan, to Miss Florence Nightingale, eldest daughter of John Nightingale, Esq., of Cobble Hill.

DIED.

HOLMES—On the 24th instant, Peter Holmes, a native of Denmark, aged 72 years.

ROBERT—In this city, on the 24th inst., Rita Louis, the beloved daughter of Andrew and Louisa Booth, aged 1 year, 8 months.

THE VICTORIA WEEKLY COLONIST, FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 1893.

## D. W. GORDON.

Tributes by the Dominion Premier and the Leader of the Opposition.

"A Most Useful and Faithful Member"—His Death Is a Great Loss.

The following is from the Toronto Empire's Ottawa dispatch: Sir John Thompson, in moving the adjournment of the House, said: "Mr. Speaker, in moving the adjournment of the House, I feel it my duty to call the attention of the House to the fact that we have received authoritative notice of the death of one of our colleagues, the late member for Nanaimo, B. C., Mr. Gordon. I am sure that I can say with the greatest earnestness on behalf of the gentleman who sat with him on this side of the House, that ever since he entered Parliament, he has been a most useful and faithful member. The devotion which he gave to his constituents, his industry, his energy, his courage, and his manly bearing, were all of which he was a model. He was a man of great courage, and his public services were appreciated there, felt more keenly than ever by his constituents, and by the fact that he was so operating with him in public life. 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