

THE NELSON AND FORT SHEPPARD.

It is understood that pressure is being brought to bear against the granting of the Nelson and Fort Sheppard Railway charter at Ottawa. We believe that if the members of the Railway Committee understood the circumstances of the district they would report favorably upon the measure. Two years ago it was thought that it was not in the interest of the province to assist in the construction of that road, because it was apprehended that it would cause trade to be diverted to the United States. The necessity for opening up the country at once has since become so urgent that this is looked upon as but a trifling drawback. The merchants of the province having the tariff in their favor, need not fear American competition. Every settler actual and intending, is crying out for railway accommodation. Business men see that a railroad is the one thing needful to make trade with the district profitable. Many who formerly opposed the construction of the Nelson and Fort Sheppard road, are now eager advocates for its construction. It is greatly to be hoped that the Legislature will give the grant of land asked for. The immediate construction of the road will be of such great advantage to the district and the province, that the least the Legislature can do to encourage it, is to give it land, which unless it is opened up by a railroad, will not be available for many years to come for any purpose whatever.

SECTIONALISM.

The debate on Mr. Eberts' Bill showed that sectionalism still stands in the way of the establishment of a University. It was hoped that at the last meeting of the friends of university education in Victoria, the hatchet of sectionalism was buried so deep that it would be impossible, or at any rate very difficult, to disinter it. But we see that it is yet above ground and in a condition to do mischief. The gentlemen who so cleverly managed, last summer, to place, as they thought, the government of the University in the hands of Mainland men, worked better or rather worse than they knew. It is seen that they sowed the seeds of distrust in the minds of Island men who, now that the bill is again before the Legislature, are unwilling to put it in their power to place them again in a hopeless minority. We must say that we are not surprised that they find it necessary to take this precaution, but every one must see that its being necessary does not promise well for the success of the institution. Before a small province like this can support a college that is anything like respectable, all parts of it must unite cordially in maintaining it and in furthering its interests. A Mainland Party and an Island Party would be continually at cross purposes, and the disagreements that would arise and the jealousies that would be engendered, would hinder its growth and make it ineffective. The center of sectionalism must be cut out before the University will begin to thrive. How this operation is to be performed, is at this moment very difficult to see.

THE INDIAN RESERVE.

When land was set apart for the Indians, the reserve was made for their benefit. It was not supposed that they should ever hold land to their own injury and to the detriment of the community in which they might live. This is precisely the case with respect to the Indian reserve which is included within the limits of the city of Victoria. The land is of little use to the Indians, and their living so near the town is to them a snare and a source of demoralization. The temptations of a city are too strong for even the Indian of British Columbia. After living in the vicinity of a city for some time he and, and to say, his whole family lose the virtues which distinguished them when they were outside the sphere of its temptations, and they become, to a greater or less extent, vicious and degraded. The kindest and most judicious thing that the friend of the Indian could do for him would be to remove him from a position so unsuitable in every way to his nature and his circumstances. If nothing was to be considered except the welfare of the Indian himself, the ought to be taken from a neighborhood in which he is certain to become demoralized, physically and morally, and placed amid surroundings more favorable to his well-being. There can be no question about this. The longer the Indians remain on the reserve the worse they will get, and the less able or willing to earn an honest and independent livelihood.

But there are other considerations which make their removal most desirable. Their residence on the reserve, situated where it is, is a detriment and a drawback to the city. As we have already said, it is part of the city, and, we will add, a very valuable part. It occupies a considerable section of the city's water front, which is required for the city's use. If the Indians could have sold the land it would long ago have been purchased at high prices and have been made the sites of residences and business establishments. As it is, it is an eyesore and an obstacle to progress. Improvement reaches the reserve and there it must stop, because a few Indians choose to live on in their primitive way. This should not be. It is no kindness to leave the reserve in possession of the Indians, and it is a positive injury to the city to allow it to remain unimproved and unimprovable. The Dominion Government should sell it to the city at a fair price. The money which it could get for the land could be used to do the Indians a hundred times

more good than they can derive from the land, holding it as they do. We cannot see why, under the circumstances, the Dominion Government should hesitate a single moment in transferring the Squah reserve from those to whom its occupancy is a very serious injury, to those who would derive from its possession great benefit, particularly when it would, for making the transfer, receive, on behalf of its wards, a very valuable consideration. If the Minister of the Interior has any regard for the welfare of the Indians, and if he has any desire to aid in the progress of Victoria, he will use his interest with the Government to have this very favorably situated tract of land made over to the corporation. There would not, we think, be much difficulty in determining upon what would be a fair price for the land. The labor and the enterprise of the citizens have given it value, and the Government must see that it is only fair that the city should be able to purchase it on reasonable terms.

TIME TO GO TO WORK.

It is a pity that the City Council does not get down to business in right earnest. The difficulties it creates for itself, and the mistakes it makes, rejoice the hearts of those who believe that the citizens of Victoria are not fit to govern themselves, and that unless the dry nurses of the Legislature put it out of the power of the Corporation to do mischief, the affairs of the city will go to wreck and ruin. Why do not the aldermen manage the affairs of the city in the common sense way in which they transact their own business? There is nothing very intricate or very mysterious in the work of the City Council. Men who are not used to the corporation harness may find it a little troublesome for a while, but they will soon get used to it. They should not be too proud to learn, or to correct a mistake after they have found that they have committed one. In the matter of forms and usage they could not have a better man to direct them than the Mayor, and, in all such matters, experienced councillors should be glad to follow his advice. It is easy to distinguish matters of form from matters of principle, and, as far as we can see, the principal causes of disagreement in the Council relate to matters of form. For instance, what difference does it make whether the minutes of the last meeting are adopted or not? It is what the Councillors do at the meeting that is of consequence. A correct record should be kept of course. But adopting the minutes or the record cannot make a right act wrong or a wrong act right. It is, however, not calculated to raise the Council in the estimation of intelligent citizens to vote the minutes of previous meetings correct. If the business done at those meetings has been set down correctly all that remains to be done is to say so. If the Council sees that it has made a mistake at any meeting, the right thing and the sensible thing to do is to correct the mistake in the proper way, and not to make a fuss about the minutes. We trust, for the Council's own sake, that it will, under the guidance of the Mayor, clear up its difficulties and make a fresh start.

A LITTLE TOO LIBERAL.

President Eliot, of Harvard University, evidently believes that he ought to be "all things to all men," for when he was at Salt Lake City, the other day, he talked to the Mormons as if they were persecuted saints. He compared them to the Pilgrim Fathers, who suffered so much and sacrificed so much to be able to worship God in the way they thought best. He said to his much-married hearers, "Here in this valley has risen the question of religious liberty. In Massachusetts all churches are equal before the law. There is no reason why this religious liberty may not be enjoyed in all other States and Territories as well as in Massachusetts. Here you founded a colony that you might worship God according to the dictates of your conscience."

If the Mormons differed from other denominations in a matter of worship only, it is certain that they would never have been persecuted. There is as wide a toleration in the United States as there is in any country in the world. But are there to be no bounds to toleration? The Mormons believe that it is right for men to have more wives than one. Is that a matter of worship? In the State of Massachusetts if a man, whether Mormon or Mahometan, marries a second wife while his first wife is alive and undivorced, he is liable to be prosecuted and punished as a criminal. Can that which is regarded as a crime in Massachusetts be considered a praiseworthy act of "worship" in Utah? If it is right and necessary to prosecute a bigamist in Massachusetts as an enemy to society, is it an offense against religious freedom to prosecute the man who has committed exactly the same offense, or a much worse one, in Salt Lake City? We would like to hear how Professor Eliot reconciles his theory in Salt Lake City with the practice of the descendants of the Puritans in Boston. This matter of toleration is a rather difficult one. The Americans, it appears, although exceedingly tolerant, draw the line at bigamy. We have heard too that they have, here and there, interfered with the liberty of the conscience of Christian Scientists. The man who conscientiously allowed his wife to die for want of medical attention that was plainly necessary was taken before a Court of law and if he did not mistake punished. Would Professor Eliot call this persecution? Who would be throw the shield of toleration over murder as well as bigamy? Many Christian Scientists are very worthy people. They live blameless lives, and they would not, with evil intent, do harm to anyone, even their enemies. But if one of those pious people allowed a member of his family to die or to grow up a cripple because it was against his con-

science to call in a doctor, is he to be held guiltless by society?

Then the Mormons have considered it their duty before now to put out of the way men who were obnoxious to them, alleging that they had the command of the Lord so to do. Were those massacres, committed in the name of religion, not murders? The people were killed according to the dictates of the Mormon conscience. Were their acts, therefore, "privileged"?

A CHANGE OF TONE.

It is very evident that the New York Sun has no faith in the validity of the claim of the United States to the sovereignty of Behring Sea. Usually the litigious folk too sanguine a view of their own case. He sees its strong points clearly, and he is blind to its defects. But the Sun, before the case has been placed in arbitration, has thrown up the sponge. This is the more singular, as it has been all along one of the staunchest advocates of the American claim. It spoke of the right of the United States to drive all sailing vessels out of Behring Sea as undoubted. It denounced the British Columbia seal hunters as pirates and robbers. But now when the claim which it asserted so strongly is to be placed before competent and impartial arbitrators, it raises a dismal outcry and declares that the United States has been betrayed, and that the award is certain to be adverse to its claims. "On every point," it whines, "the United States will be turned out of court a defeated and expropriated party." How does it know this? The answer is not far to seek. It is convinced, and has been convinced all along, that the United States has no case. Its confident assertions, its bragging, and its lulling have been mere bluff, and it now hastens to anticipate the defeat which it knows, and has from the first known, is inevitable. It hopes to be able to make its readers believe that the adverse award will be owing to the mismanagement of the Harrison Administration, and not to the inherent unsoundness of the American case. This may be very smart, and may, perhaps, help to save the credit of the Sun, but it is a shallow device and the very reverse of honest.

"A CLEAR BACK DOWN."

Under the above caption, our New Westminster contemporary has a leading article in its issue of Wednesday, in which it endeavors to show—first, that the action of the Legislature taken against its publishers was nothing more or less than a party political movement on the part of the Government; and, secondly, that the Government, in taking the second step, made a complete and ignominious "back down." As to the first proposition, it has already been clearly pointed out by us that the movement was not a party one at all—a position which the Division List completely supports. The leader of the House moved his resolution on the 22nd ultimo, because the House almost unanimously demanded it; and the libellous article in the Columbian was not more emphatically condemned on the Government side of the House than on the Opposition side. Indeed, there was only one member in the whole House who had the hardihood to say one word in palliation of its offense.

As to the alleged "back-down," the very reverse is the fact. In supporting the resolution authorizing Mr. Speaker to bring the delinquents before the bar of the House, there probably was not a single member in the House who had not present to his mind the contingency of refusal to obey the summons; but, as clearly shown by the Attorney-General, who cited authorities, that was the proper step to take. In the event of refusal, it was then competent for the Speaker to arrest the delinquents and bring them by force to the bar of the House; to the Attorney-General to institute criminal proceedings for libel against the offending parties; or to the House to do what it did, in referring the matter to a select committee. In doing this, the House adopted the mildest course at its disposal, and it is therefore in extremely bad form for the Columbian to characterize that course as a "back-down" on the part of the Government—and to persist in the false theory that it was the Government—knowing right well that it was the House, including the members of the Opposition and the so-called "Independent" party as well as members on the Government side.

We notice in the same article a reference to certain "Independents" having "recently" rallied to the Government ranks. Does our contemporary propose to deny two members of the "Independent" party the right to gravitate to the Government side, when, as a matter of fact, the other members of that party have thrown themselves, like bolts, into the arms of the Opposition? Surely, the same freedom of choice should be conceded to the two, that has been exercised by the six. Our conviction is that the two who have thought proper to ally themselves with the Government will be better able to defend their action to their constituents than the six who have chosen to ally themselves with the "sickly" Opposition.

NOT A "FAILURE."

The Toronto Globe, we see, blames the Government for the "failure" at Washington. It says: "The ministers who went to Washington not only failed in their mission, but inflicted a most serious injury on Canada by presenting the subject of reciprocity negotiations in a way calculated to insure failure, and as far as possible to close the door against those who are really desirous of improving the trade relations of the two countries."

Nothing could be further from the truth than this. From the Financial Minister's account of the negotiations, which is the only information which the Globe could have on the subject, it is evident that the matter was presented fairly and fully, and was discussed with candor and in the best possible spirit. Mr. Blaine was very frank. He would listen to no proposal for partial reciprocity. The only reciprocity which he would agree to is one without limit. If there is to be free trade between the two countries it must, according to the Secretary of State, be a trade in manufactured articles as well as in natural products. Nothing is to be kept out. And the reciprocity must be with the United States alone. Under the system which Mr. Blaine outlined no commodity could be admitted free into Canada which the United States imposes a duty. Exemption could not be made in favor of even the mother country. She would have to be, if Mr. Blaine's scheme of reciprocity was accepted, on precisely the same footing as France or Spain or any other foreign country. United States commodities of all kinds could come into Canada free, but the United States tariff would have to be levied on the commodities of every other country, Great Britain included. Not only would Canada be obliged to adopt the United States Customs tariff, but she would have to make her excise duties identical with those of the Great Republic. In fact, the fiscal system of the two countries would have to be identical. This was Mr. Blaine's ultimatum.

THE OPPOSITION OBJECTORS.

It is very evident that the Opposition are opposing the deep-sea fishery scheme merely for the sake of opposition. The objections that its members advance are, for the most part, trivial and imaginary. Some of them seem to think that the company of capitalists are so stupid and unintelligent as to embark in a great undertaking with no prospect whatever of success, and others declare that they will make plenty of money, but their operations will, nevertheless, confer no benefits on the province. The organ of the Opposition, which presents in a condensed shape the arguments and criticisms of its members, says, "The

affair stands at present, it appears to us it is the company's wealth that is to be most largely increased." How, we should like to know, is the company's wealth to be increased, unless the fishery enterprise is successful? The Imperial loan will be expended in bringing out and settling the fishermen, and the land grant will not be available for the purposes of making money. It is the company to recoup itself for its outlay unless it is by selling the fish that are caught, and how can the company increase its wealth without benefiting any number of people in town and country, besides the fishermen. It seems to us quite safe to presume that the capitalists who put a million of money in a company to carry on the fisheries, do so in good faith. They combine, not to cheat British Columbia, or to rob the fishermen, but to catch and sell the fish, and fish products which the sea around our coasts can be made to yield. If the company fails, the loss will fall on those who compose it. Even then, if it makes a vigorous attempt to develop the fisheries, it will have done the province more or less good. The money which it must spend in making the attempt, will find its way into the pockets of British Columbia. If it succeeds and makes money for itself, it cannot help doing good to the province. Either way the people of British Columbia cannot lose much. For our part we have faith both in the productiveness of the sea, and in the intelligence, and the integrity of the British Commercial Company.

The demand for more particulars is much more worthy of respect than the predictions and suspicions of the Opposition journals. But it is evident from the very nature of the scheme that the Government cannot now be in a position to give many minute details. It should be remembered that there are three parties to the arrangements that are to be made, namely: the Imperial Government, the Provincial Government, and the Commercial Company. It would not do for the British Columbia Legislative Assembly to take upon itself the arrangement of all the details without consulting the other two parties. The old saying, it takes two to make a bargain, holds good in this case, as well as in many others. It would be very easy and very pleasant for the members of our little Parliament to determine upon all the minutiae of the scheme. Its members are very wise, no doubt, and have much experience in that kind of work. They would, therefore, settle matters in a short time completely to their own satisfaction. But it might happen that the Imperial Government would not approve of all that had been done, and as it holds the strings of the purse, defence must be paid to its opinions. Then some of the arrangements might not suit the Commercial Company, and as it is members might be so unreasonable as to claim that their views are entitled to some consideration. On the whole, therefore, it is the best way, and, in fact, the only feasible way for the Legislature to deliberate upon the main features of the scheme, and leave it to the Government to settle the details with the other two parties concerned.

The nature of the enterprise is such that a large discretion as to details must necessarily be left to the Government. It is impossible for the Legislative Assembly to arrange every part of the scheme, for the simple reason that the other parties interested are not represented in that body. The representatives of the people will, after the two bills before them are carefully considered, be in a position to pronounce upon the object of the enterprise and the means that they will be devised to carry it out; and they will also be able to put matters in such a shape that the Government may safely be left to complete the arrangements.

We have no desire to fight the battle of the schools over again. We believe that the stand we took was the right one; that if our advice had been taken and the course we pointed out followed, the unpleasantness would have by this time been almost forgotten, and that there would have been no McLeod case to be investigated by a committee of the Legislature.

THE NEW ROUTE NORTH. Captain William Moore has a very high opinion of the resources of the Yukon country. He has been there and he knows a great deal about it. Gold, he believes, is to be found in that region in abundance, and although it is so far north the soil is fertile and the climate such that a large proportion of the food of the miners can be raised there. This Land of Ophir can not be reached only by a circuitous and a dangerous route. The carriage of the limited quantity of goods and provisions that can be packed over that route is at the enormous rate of 25 cents a pound. This, of itself, is a formidable obstacle to the settlement of the country or to the working of its mines. But Capt. Moore has found a way of making the resources of this rich country available. He has discovered a route, chiefly by water, by which the distance can be greatly shortened and the cost of carriage correspondingly decreased. By his route the distance will

be five hundred miles instead of five thousand, and the cost of carriage three cents a pound instead of twenty-five cents.

Capt. Moore must not be looked upon as a mere dreamer. He is, on the contrary, a practical man. It was he who discovered the route to Cassiar, and what he says about a short cut to Yukon, should therefore be heard with respect. We may say in passing that practical men are apt to pool-pool the theories and schemes of men who they condemn as mere visionaries. It sometimes happens that these "visionaries" are right ahead of their time, and the theories and the plans which practical men laugh at and declare to be impossible are, perhaps after the man who devised them is dead and almost if not altogether forgotten, found to be not only possible, but in the highest degree valuable. The world owes more than it is willing to acknowledge, to its dreamers, or as some men coarsely call them, its "cranks."

This scheme of a shorter way to the extreme Northern parts of the province, should be carefully considered by the authorities. Capt. Moore should be encouraged to go on with his explorations, and to perfect his scheme. It should, when completed, be submitted to the judgment of the men who know most about the subject, whether they live in this province or in Eastern Canada, and if it is found to be practicable, the route should be opened up without any needless delay.

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The Minister of Marine and Fisheries has informed our Ottawa correspondent that "the interim report of the Royal Commission on the British Columbia salmon fisheries has not, in a large measure, Mr. Wilnot's report of last year." Every one who attended the meetings of the Commission could have safely foretold that this would have been the case. It was abundantly evident from almost everything that the Chairman, Mr. Wilnot, said and did, that his main object was to find proof to substantiate that report, and to obtain evidence in favor of his preconceived opinions. To judge by his manner and his language, Mr. Wilnot came to British Columbia to impart instruction, not to gain information. He is, evidently, in his intellectual make-up, and in his disposition, a true Bourbon. He can learn nothing and he can forget nothing. It is greatly to be regretted that so important an industry as that of the British Columbia salmon packing should be to any appreciable extent at the mercy of a man so intellectually hide-bound as the Chairman of the Fishery Commission.

It seems to us to be not exactly fair to the salmon fishers and owners, or respectful to the third Commissioner, the Hon. Mr. Higgins, to take action on Mr. Wilnot's report before the Department knows what are the conclusions at which Mr. Higgins has arrived. That gentleman differed very materially on some points from the Chairman, while the enquiry was going on, and his opinion is considered by experienced fishermen and owners here, entitled to quite as much respect as is that of Mr. Wilnot. But Mr. Wilnot has the ear of the Department, and its course, it appears, has been decided upon before Mr. Higgins' report has even been received. Of course, the Department has power, and can act as Mr. Wilnot dictates, and the owners, whether they are justly or unjustly treated, will have to submit. They were most unwilling that their interests should be placed in Mr. Wilnot's hands. They protested against his appointment as Commissioner, and now that he has returned to Ottawa, the Minister of Marine has immediately decided upon the course he intends to take. We do not know what the canners think of this treatment, but we have very decided opinions on the subject.

ONE OF THE EFFECTS OF THE CONCLUSIONS MADE BY THE FINANCE MINISTER WILL EVIDENTLY BE TO COMPEL THE LIBERALS EITHER TO ABANDON THEIR POLICY OF UNRESTRICTED RECIPROcity OR OPENLY TO ADVOCATE THE POLITICAL UNION OF THE DOMINION WITH THE UNITED STATES. This would be really as loyal and a greatly more honest policy than that which they have been advocating for the past three or four years.

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be five hundred miles instead of five thousand, and the cost of carriage three cents a pound instead of twenty-five cents. Capt. Moore must not be looked upon as a mere dreamer. He is, on the contrary, a practical man. It was he who discovered the route to Cassiar, and what he says about a short cut to Yukon, should therefore be heard with respect. We may say in passing that practical men are apt to pool-pool the theories and schemes of men who they condemn as mere visionaries. It sometimes happens that these "visionaries" are right ahead of their time, and the theories and the plans which practical men laugh at and declare to be impossible are, perhaps after the man who devised them is dead and almost if not altogether forgotten, found to be not only possible, but in the highest degree valuable. The world owes more than it is willing to acknowledge, to its dreamers, or as some men coarsely call them, its "cranks."

A NEW ROUTE NORTH.

Captain William Moore has a very high opinion of the resources of the Yukon country. He has been there and he knows a great deal about it. Gold, he believes, is to be found in that region in abundance, and although it is so far north the soil is fertile and the climate such that a large proportion of the food of the miners can be raised there. This Land of Ophir can not be reached only by a circuitous and a dangerous route. The carriage of the limited quantity of goods and provisions that can be packed over that route is at the enormous rate of 25 cents a pound. This, of itself, is a formidable obstacle to the settlement of the country or to the working of its mines. But Capt. Moore has found a way of making the resources of this rich country available. He has discovered a route, chiefly by water, by which the distance can be greatly shortened and the cost of carriage correspondingly decreased. By his route the distance will

is attempting "to put in force Mercatorite methods against the last bulwark of the rights and liberties of the people—the free and independent press," but the Legislative Assembly of the province. The Government, in this matter of calling the Colum-

bian to account for what it published about the Private Bills Committee, only count for so many members of the Assembly. It is the Assembly that the Columbian has libelled, and it is the Assembly, through its Speaker, that calls the Messrs. Kennedy to answer for scandalous libel and contempt. If the Columbian persists in accusing the Government of forcing "Mercatorite methods against the press," the public will be under the necessity of condemning it as either ignorant or malignant. It certainly will not plead guilty to ignorance, so all that remains is to set down its persistence in attributing the press prosecution, to the Government, to malignity.

If our contemporary would condescend to come down to plain facts and give the public one single instance of "political corruption" and "political repulsion" we would understand it better, and sympathize with it more deeply. What are the specific acts of corruption which it inveighs against, and who have committed them? A prosaic matter-of-fact public wants the particulars of the offenses which it declares have been committed. Fine writing such as we see in the Columbian—a specimen of which we have given—being charming, but it is not evidence. No matter how much it delights people to read, it cannot condemn individuals on vague though eloquent generalities. Who are the corrupt politicians, political reptiles, the subverters of legislation? If there are any such in our House of Assembly let the Columbian tell the world who they are. When it does so it may claim to possess the courage of its convictions, but if it can do nothing more than say that our legislators are totally depraved and desperately wicked it will not do much to gain for itself the reputation of being either fearless or independent, and will not go far towards effecting the reforms which it declares to be necessary.

AN EXHORTATION.

The Montreal Star advises the Liberals to be frank, and to let the people of the Dominion know whether or not, since it has been defined by Mr. Blaine, they adhere to their policy of unrestricted reciprocity. "Now, the country demands," it says, "and demands fairly, a plain statement of the Liberals. Do they still advocate unrestricted reciprocity, under these conditions? They can rest assured that the question cannot be dodged, even by so desperate an expedient as accusing the Finance Minister of false witness." After showing that the acceptance of unrestricted reciprocity, as Mr. Blaine defines it, would make it necessary for the Dominion Government to raise a very large sum, between eleven and twelve millions, by direct taxation, the Star goes on to say:

"Unrestricted Reciprocity, with our tariff made at Washington, would be Commercial Union without the advantage of sharing in the American revenue. If completed, has been decided upon before Mr. Higgins' report has even been received. Of course, the Department has power, and can act as Mr. Wilnot dictates, and the owners, whether they are justly or unjustly treated, will have to submit. They were most unwilling that their interests should be placed in Mr. Wilnot's hands. They protested against his appointment as Commissioner, and now that he has returned to Ottawa, the Minister of Marine has immediately decided upon the course he intends to take. We do not know what the canners think of this treatment, but we have very decided opinions on the subject.

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From our own Corre

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