

**DURRANT CONVICTED.**  
The conviction of Durrant on Friday must have been a surprise to nearly every one who took an interest in the trial. It was generally believed that after so protracted a trial the jury would take a long time to deliberate, and not a few were in doubt whether they would after all agree to a verdict. There was a great deal of evidence, but it was all circumstantial, and there are many persons of considerable intelligence who have a prejudice against evidence of that kind. This was seen when a jury was being selected. A very large number of the talesmen were challenged and rejected because they openly avowed that they could not conscientiously agree to a verdict that had nothing but circumstantial evidence to support it. It was thought that even though some of the jurors might be morally certain that the prisoner had committed the crime, they might not be able to satisfy themselves that the evidence from a legal point of view was strong enough to permit them to agree to a verdict of guilty. But the event has proved that there were no substantial grounds for such speculations. The jury-men must have studied the evidence as it was presented most carefully and arrived at an estimate of its value, so that when the trial was concluded they had little else to do than to record their verdict. Twenty minutes was a very short time indeed to review the immense mass of testimony that they had heard. That the verdict was a righteous one few that have followed the proceedings at all carefully will, we think, venture to deny.

The San Francisco newspapers must have saved the jury a great deal of trouble. Not content with publishing the evidence verbatim they outlined much of it before it was given and commented upon it after it was heard in court. The prisoner was treated by them as guilty long before the verdict was delivered. Are the ends of justice furthered or hindered by this outspoken way of dealing with a case while it is being tried? Is not such an unrestrained mode of reporting a case while it is pending calculated to prejudice the public and the jury either in favor of or against the person accused? Can a prisoner say that he is tried fairly when he is tried by the court and jury and the newspapers simultaneously? Through we strongly believe in the freedom of the press we incline to the opinion that such reports as appeared in the San Francisco newspapers of the Durrant trial are an abuse of that freedom.

Another question suggested by the trial is how far is the counsel for the state warranted in going to secure a verdict favorable to his contention. Should he confine his address to the jury to a statement of the facts, and a business-like review of the evidence, and an argument to show their weight and significance? Should he, in short, appeal solely to the reason and the common sense of the jury, or is he besides doing all this warranted in making an impassioned appeal to them, taking for granted that the accused man is without doubt guilty, and painting him as a monster of wickedness? It seems to us that appeals to prejudices and passions are out of place, and indeed unfair, on the part of the public prosecutor. Was the "terrible arraignment" of District Attorney Barnes in this Durrant case, for instance, necessary? Did it help the jury to arrive at an impartial verdict? Assuming for the moment that the man was innocent, would not the District Attorney have taken upon himself a terrible responsibility in thus going out of his way and using all his power of eloquence to fasten the rope round the neck of a man who was guiltless of offence? It seems to us that neither the newspapers nor the public prosecutor should say or do anything calculated to make it difficult for an innocent man to make his innocence manifest. They, on the contrary, should do everything that their duty to society can permit to make it easy for the accused man to prove that he is not guilty of the offence with which he is charged. But if everything that forensic talent and journalistic skill can devise is done to prejudice the minds of the jury and the public against him, this might be made almost if not altogether impossible. We believe that Durrant was guilty and that the verdict was a righteous one, but we also believe that if he had been innocent it would have been unnecessarily hard for him to convince the jury and the public that he had not murdered Blanche Lamont.

**JOURNALISTIC RUFFIANISM.**  
The Province newspaper in its issue of the 19th ult. made a covert attack of a gross nature on whoever had induced the Duke of Montrose to invest in the Golden Eagle mine at Alberni, although there was not the slightest foundation for such a charge. It was well known that Colonel Baker acted as agent for the Duke in this matter, but the Province in its issue of the 26th ult. stated it was unaware of that fact, and the editor tried to wriggle out of the miserable position in which he had placed himself by what he now calls an apology, but which no reasonable person could consider to be one. Finding that Colonel Baker was, very properly, using the paper for libel the editor in the issue of yesterday at last apologized to Colonel Baker for the gross assertions in connection with the Golden Eagle, but in the next page uses most contemptible tactics in order to discredit him in another direction by trying to fasten upon him the personal responsibility of the Government having ceased to subscribe for thirty-six copies of the Province newspaper, twenty-four of which are distributed among leading libraries in England.

We are in a position to state that the action of the Government in ceasing to subscribe to the Province newspaper was the decision of the Executive and was not done on the personal responsibility of Col. Baker. The only blame we think can attach to the Government in the matter is that it should never have subscribed to such a paper at all. But when the Province not only attacks the Government as an opposition paper on matters of party politics but descends to the low level of trumping up foul accusations against the private character of Government officers as it did in its issue of the 19th ult., it is high time that the Government should cease patronizing such a disseminator of contemptible untruths. As to the Hon. Colonel Baker, his character is so well known and respected that it is not likely to suffer from such base attacks, but for the sake of the interests of our country it is much to be regretted that an honorable man cannot undertake a leading position in politics without being subject to such indignities.

**THE ASHANTI DIFFICULTY.**  
There is evidently going to be a little war in Ashanti. The King of that country is a very bad neighbor and it will be necessary to teach him good manners. His country is difficult of approach and he evidently believes that the British will not consider it worth while to invade his territory. Besides he believes that he is stronger and his people are in a better condition to resist invasion than they were twenty-one years ago, when Sir Garnet Wolseley paid Ashanti a visit and taught its inhabitants, from the King downwards, that it was not safe to trust too much to the forbearance of the British. The Ashantis have become so troublesome of late that Colonel Sir Francis Scott, the Inspector General of the Gold Coast Forces, has come to the conclusion that the Gold Coast Colony can never be quiet until Ashanti has been brought under British rule. There appears to be a lady in this case as there is in almost every other. Colonel Scott says: "The Queen mother—the mother of the young King—is a powerful factor in the country and is responsible for much that occurs. The actual power of the King is small as he has to submit to his mother's counsel." The example which this lady sets to neighboring chiefs is dangerous. If she can set British authority at defiance they are inclined to believe that they can do the same, and they are consequently "watching like a hen on a fence to see which way we go."

In December Capt. Donald Stewart was sent to Comassee (now spelled Kumasi) with an ultimatum, to which no attention seems to have been paid. Since then another ultimatum has been sent, demanding that the King put his country under British protection. To this demand, it is said, a point blank refusal has been given, and now it remains for Great Britain to enforce her demand, which she seems well inclined to do. Sir Francis Scott said to the representative of Reuters' agency: "If the King absolutely refuses to accept a British protectorate, it will be necessary to despatch a strong force of Imperial troops, not necessarily white troops. Some special service officers will be required from England. A force of say 100 troops from Lagos, 600 Gold Coast Houseas and a battalion of the West Indian regiment—which I found worked so well in the Jubas campaign, would, in my opinion, be sufficient."

**SLAVERY UNDER THE FLAG.**  
There are many who are ready to assert that slavery does not and cannot exist under British rule. Such persons will be shocked to know that hundreds of thousands of slaves—negro slaves—live and suffer under the protection of the British flag. And more than that, it is found not to be by any means an easy matter to procure for these slaves their freedom. There are on the west coast of Africa two islands, Zanzibar and Pemba, which are absolutely under British control, in the former of which there are 140,000 slaves, some of them held legally and some illegally. There are, according to Mr. Donald Mackenzie, 90,000 slaves on the island of Pemba. So that there shall be no mistake about this we will quote verbatim part of a resolution passed unanimously at a meeting of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society recently held in London: "That whereas it is computed that a quarter of a million of slaves are at the present time engaged in working upon the plantations or as porters, &c., in the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, having first been enslaved in Central Africa under circumstances of the greatest barbarity—and nearly all of them taken to Zanzibar and Pemba illegally in contravention of the Sultan's decree of 1873, abolishing the above trade—this meeting would emphatically urge Her Majesty's Government to abolish the status of slavery in Zanzibar and Pemba without further delay, inasmuch as the continuance of a state slavery necessarily leads to a corresponding activity in the slave trade." The state of these slaves does not appear to be much better than that of slaves generally. It had been said that they were contented with their condition, and that to liberate them without finding homes and occupation for them would be cruelty. But Mr. Mackenzie said in his speech: "At Chaki Chaki I walked into a tumble-down old prison. Here I found a number of prisoners, male and female, heavily chained and fettered. I thought that these men and women must be dreadful criminals or murderers or they must have committed similar crimes and are now awaiting their doom. I inquired of them all why they were there. The only real criminal was one who had stolen a little rice from his master. All the others I found were wearing these ponderous chains and fetters because they had attempted to run away from their cruel masters and gain their freedom—a very allowable and just thing to do. I thought that the masters of these slaves are Arabs. As the Germans in circumstances somewhat similar do not attempt to abolish slavery, Baron Schele, the Governor of German East Africa, declared only a year ago that any general measure for the abolition of slavery was "out of the question, as it would inevitably result in the economic ruin of the colony." This seems to be pretty much the opinion of Mr. Hardinge and others in authority in Zanzibar.

**BRITAIN AND VENEZUELA.**  
NEW YORK, Nov. 2.—A special to the Herald from Barbadoes, West Indies, says Great Britain may have to declare war with Venezuela not only upon the boundary question. In previous dispatches reports have been circulated that for some weeks Venezuelan gunboats had been cruising along the coast of the island of Trinidad, one of the islands forming the main of the British Indies; that complaints had been lodged with the colonial government as to the unwarrantable interference by the Venezuelan gunboats with British vessels trading in these waters, and to the fact that British ships had been fired upon, the crews narrowly escaping with life, while the sails had been rent by the shots from the Venezuelan cruisers. "People here have been startled by the announcement that a commander named Filbert, on board a Venezuelan coast guard, British schooner Myosotis, on board that vessel, while on a voyage from Port of Spain, Trinidad, in a most unprovoked manner, the schooner was brought to and the guards were at once made alongside and took the schooner, with its dead owner and freight crew on board, in tow, and proceeded to Carapana. Here the vessel was rammaged from stem to stern, and as there was no contraband goods found on board the vessel was liberated. The Myosotis was seized by the Venezuelans some time ago upon an alleged breach of the revenue laws. Mr. Garcia decided to defend the case, and proceeded to Caracas for trial. The court dismissed the action and liberated the vessel. Whether the murder of Mr. Garcia was the outcome of revenge for the defeat of the Venezuelan commander in court is a question which is being eagerly discussed here.

Exposures to cold, damp winds, may result in pneumonia unless the system is kept vigorous with Hood's Sarsaparilla.

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#### WILFUL MURDER.

H. H. Holmes Found Guilty of the Murder of B. F. Pitzel.

A Unanimous Verdict of Guilty Found Against the Arch Homicide.

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 2.—Counsel Rotan having addressed the jury for the defence of Holmes on trial for the murder of B. F. Pitzel, Judge Arnold, who presided, having received the evidence continued: "These questions must be determined by you. In this case: Is Pitzel dead? Did he die a violent death? If he did, did the prisoner kill him or did he commit suicide?"

Holmes was convicted of murder in the first degree. He coughed slightly when he heard the worst, but that was the only sign. The jury retired at 5:40 o'clock. They had, it is said, reached their verdict before the doors of the room closed upon them but for hunger sake ate their supper first. Then they took a ballot and every man of the twelve answered: "Guilty of murder in the first degree."

Holmes, before he was taken back to the Moyamensing prison said, "I feel that this condemns me. It was an unjust trial." Immediately after the announcement of the verdict the usual application of leave to file a motion for a new trial was made. The verdict was a surprise to many persons who did not believe the crime had been fastened upon Holmes beyond a reasonable doubt.

MONTREAL, Oct. 30.—(Special).—The Bank of Montreal has received from the Cariboo gold mines in British Columbia a pyramid and a brick of gold valued at \$70,000. This pyramid weighed 2,435 ounces, and the brick, 1,560.

It is a striking illustration of the extent to which the stamp-collecting fad has been carried that some speculators have been accused of getting the smaller Central American States to issue new sets of stamps every few years, thus enabling the speculators to make a profit by selling the new issues as something novel and the old ones as something rare.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

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**FALL ASSIZES.**

Vernon	Monday	14th October
Lytton	Friday	11th October
New Westminster	Wednesday	6th November
Vancouver	Monday	14th November
Victoria	Tuesday	19th November
Nanaimo	Tuesday	28th November

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