

The Colonist.

THURSDAY, MAY 21, 1896.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

The present position of Western Australia bears, in some respects, a great resemblance to that of the Transvaal. Owing to the discovery of rich goldfields within its territory, there has been in the course of the last three or four years a great influx of strangers. These "New-comers," as they are called, are nearly equal in number to the whole population of the colony five years ago. As it is not by any means unlikely that five years hence or even less British Columbia may be in a position somewhat similar to both the Transvaal and Western Australia, it may be useful to inquire into the way in which the latter country accommodated itself to the new and greatly altered condition of things.

It can be easily understood that the sudden and the immense addition to the wealth of the colony, and the very large proportionate increase to its population must have made the management of its affairs much more difficult than it had hitherto been, and brought its Government face to face with some problems by no means easy of solution.

It was soon seen that the New-comers would not allow the Old-timers sole control of the government of the colony. The Old-timers were naturally jealous of the New-comers, and were not very willing at once to accord to them representation in the Legislature of the colony proportionate to their numbers. As most of the immigrants were men over twenty-one years of age there were in a given number of them a larger number of men qualified to be electors than among the same number of Old-timers. The New-comers were, however, moderate in their demands as regards representation. The Legislature is composed of a Legislative Council and a House of Assembly. There are in the Upper House 21 members, and in the Lower House 33 members. Both branches of the Legislature are elective.

The franchise was easily obtained, as it only required six months' residence and a small property qualification to make a settler eligible to vote for a member of the Assembly. The New-comers, who are chiefly miners, have at present only one member in the House of thirty-three. They are agitating for five members. As they now number about 40,000, having among them a large proportion of men arrived at the years of discretion, no one can say that their demand is unreasonable. It is safe, we think, to predict that the New-comers will soon get what they want in the way of representation in the Legislature.

The establishment of large mining communities in the country made it necessary to increase the facilities of transport. There was already a government railway in the colony, but it does not appear to have been very well equipped, for the road broke down and there was a serious block of traffic. The Minister of Railways was taken to task, and he tried to shift the responsibility on to the shoulders of the Premier, who, he said, would not give him money enough properly to equip the road with rolling stock. An investigation was instituted into the matter and the upshot was that the Governor, Sir John Forrest, undertook with the advice of his ministry to dismiss the Minister of Railways. After that the railway was administered in a way satisfactory to the New-comers and to the business community generally.

The miners did not complain of excessive or unfair taxation and they had nothing serious to say against the mining laws, but they regarded clause 2 of the transfer regulations as a grievance and the Governor was asked to treat the Minister of Mines as he had treated the late Minister of Railways, but he did not see fit to accede to this request. The deputation who waited upon His Excellency were well treated. They were dined and wine and given a chance at the convivial meeting to say all that they had to say. "Peace and good-will," the correspondent of the Times says, "gave as the occasion demanded the prevailing note. There was, nevertheless, a distinct recognition on both sides of interests of a divergent kind which might require delicate and conciliatory handling, in order to issue in the common prosperity by which the whole colony should benefit." Both New-comers and Old-timers were reasonable, and there is every reason to believe that these distinctions will soon disappear and Western Australia will before long be a harmonious as well as a prosperous community.

The question of water supply appears to be the only serious subject with which the Government of Western Australia has now to grapple. The districts of Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, as our readers know, are very badly supplied with water, and if it cannot be had by boring, of which there does not seem to be much hope, it will require an expenditure of more than ten millions of dollars to give them a supply of only five millions of gallons a day.

The increase of parliamentary representation is the only other political question which may be regarded as a "burning one," and that we have no doubt will soon be satisfactorily settled. Western Australia has increased in

wealth very rapidly. Its revenue five years ago was a little over £500,000. In two years its population had increased over 33 per cent, and its revenue had risen to £681,000. "In eighteen months from the end of 1893 to the middle of last year the revenue had risen from £681,000 to one million and a half, and the increase is proceeding at an equally rapid rate. The revenue of last February amounted to £177,373, and exceeded that of February of 1895 by about 86 per cent." The deposits in the Post Office Savings Bank in February of this year amounted to £49,022, or nearly a quarter of a million of dollars, and the total balance to the credit of depositors was £355,637, as against £295,196 in February 1895. The amount of gold exported in February, the hottest month in the year, was 18,000 ounces, and a large increase is expected when the weather gets cooler.

THE "COMPETITOR."

The name of an American vessel, the Competitor, has of late been frequently seen in the telegraphic despatches, and as very few particulars have been given about her, our readers would perhaps like to know a little more about the craft respecting which so much has been written. The Competitor is a very small vessel. She is only 47 tons burthen, 72 feet 4 inches long, 20 feet wide and 4 feet in depth. She sailed from Key West between 10 and 11 o'clock in the night of April 20, and had on board, besides her crew, about twenty-five or thirty Cubans. She was loaded with arms and ammunition. A few days after she sailed from Key West she was captured by the Spanish gunboat Mesagera near Berracos on the northern coast of the province of Pinar del Rio. Her crew were taken prisoners. They were tried by court-martial and sentenced to death.

The news of the capture, trial and conviction of the men caused a good deal of excitement in the United States. They were without doubt on a filibustering expedition. But as they were said not to be armed when they were taken it was contended that they should be tried by a civil court. Representations were made by the United States Government and also by the British Government—for one of the men is, or claims to be, a British subject. The Government of Spain has been as courteous and conciliatory as could be expected, but the populace have been noisy and not over civil to the United States authorities. They are exasperated at the attitude assumed by Congress and the American Press with respect to Cuba. They consider that the Americans have been the reverse of friendly, and if the Spanish Government listened to the popular voice there would very soon be war between the United States and Spain. The danger does not appear to be altogether over yet. Of course Spain is no match for the United States, but as things are, she might be able to do the Americans a great deal of harm before they could put themselves in a position to strike an effective blow in return. American jingoism has of late caused the Great Republic to be regarded in many quarters with feelings the reverse of friendly. The condemned men have not yet been pardoned, nor, according to present appearances, are they likely to be.

THE ALASKA BOUNDARY.

The Canadian Gazette (London), of April 30, contains the following paragraph:

We are glad to see that Mr. Seton Karr is raising in the British House of Commons that phase of the Alaskan boundary question which has been ventilated of late in the Canadian Gazette. He put upon the order paper for Tuesday the following question, but it has been deferred to Thursday, it may be to allow the Colonial Secretary to communicate with the Canadian Government.

To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the investigations of Mr. Alexander Begg, historiographer of British Columbia, regarding the boundary line between Alaska and British Columbia, south of the 56th parallel of latitude, as detailed in the Canadian Gazette of April 16th.

Whether it is a fact, as contended by the British Columbia Government, that three million acres of land of high strategic and commercial importance on the Pacific Coast opposite Prince of Wales Island, which was assigned to Great Britain by the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1825, is now marked upon United States official maps and charts as United States territory.

And whether, seeing that this Alaskan boundary south of the 56th parallel was not reported upon by the recent Alaskan Boundary Commission, he will suggest to the Canadian Government that an early and independent investigation be made upon the subject.

NEARLY RIGHT.

The Oregonian sees the difficulty that lies in the way of accepting as correct the American claim as to what is the southern part of the boundary between Alaska and British territory. It, for some reason that we are at a loss to understand, designates Prince of Wales Island "Prince Edward's Island." It states correctly that the line commences at the southern point of that island, and according to the treaty of 1825 runs northwards through Portland Channel. Our contemporary says: "Running directly north from the southern part of Prince Edward's Island is Behm Channel, and this could be followed directly northward in a direct way, as

to form the line designated in the treaty. Portland Channel lies many miles further east, hence it would be impossible to draw a line through its centre from the south part of Prince Edward's Island. The line would have to go far to the east from the starting point and thence northward. Of course these topographical difficulties cannot be overcome, and a settlement must be reached as equitably as possible in accordance with existing conditions."

The conditions that now exist are the conditions that always existed. The southern point of Prince of Wales Island is exactly where it is described to be in the treaty of 1825. North or northward from that point cannot be interpreted east or eastward. There are no conditions that would warrant such a change as that. The simple and the honest way of correcting the mistake that has been made is to run the line as the treaty directs without reference to the name of the body of water through which it must run. If this is done the United States will get every inch of territory it purchased from Russia, and Great Britain will get what it honestly owns. There is no dispute as yet about the matter, because this part of the boundary line has not yet been run; but when it is run, if the directions of the treaty are followed, the line will not go near what is now called Portland Canal.

"IDENTICAL."

The Winnipeg Free Press quotes the following extract from La Patrie's report of the speech delivered by Mr. Laurier in Quebec, on the 9th inst., to show that there is really no difference between the policy of the Liberals and the Conservatives on the Manitoba school question:

"If the people of Canada carry me to power, as I feel convinced they will, I will settle this question to the satisfaction of all the parties interested. I will have with me in my Government Sir Oliver Mowat, who has always been in Ontario, at the peril of his personal popularity, the champion of the Catholic minority and of separate schools. I will put him at the head of a commission where all the interests at stake will be represented, and I assure you that I will succeed in satisfying those who suffer at present. It is not the venerated name of Mr. Mowat alone a guarantee of the success of this scheme? And then, in the end, if conciliation would fail, I would have to exercise the constitutional recourse which the law furnishes, a recourse which I will exercise completely and in its entirety."

This shows that there is really no difference on the Manitoba school question between the policy of the Hon. Wilfred Laurier and that of Sir Charles Tupper. They both would have the question settled amicably by the Manitoba trustees themselves. They would both try conciliatory means to effect that purpose. And they would both, if conciliatory means should fail, "have to exercise the constitutional recourse which the law furnishes." A recourse which Mr. Laurier declares he "will exercise completely and in its entirety."

Commenting upon Mr. Laurier's declaration quoted above the Free Press, which is not certainly a Conservative paper, after asserting "that the policy of the two parties as to ultimate coercion is identical," goes on to say:

We have then quite sufficient information that in dealing with the Manitoba school question the policy of the Conservative party in parliament, as compared with the policy of the Liberal party, will have precisely the same effect upon the educational system of this province. The candidates on both sides may as well face this fact. Attempts may be made to keep it out of sight, which may succeed for a while, but public intelligence is greater than some politicians' think, and the real truth will be seen. The crux of the matter is in the discussion as to the terms of settlement. It is at this stage that the real battle should be, and will be fought. Both Manitoba's representatives without respect to party, should be committed to employing every effort to have this stage provided for immediately after election; and preventing its ever getting beyond it. This is a Manitoba and not a party question.

The Daily Nor-Wester, which supports Sir Charles Tupper's Government and also courageously comes to substantially the same conclusions as the Free Press. In an article on "The Issues of the Day," it says:

It is unfortunate that the Manitoba school question has been dragged into the political arena, and that it will to a greater or less extent, become an issue. No one who rightly understands this question will consider it a real issue, and this is especially true in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories.

The Manitoba school question has been a political football for many years. It originated in the desire of certain parties to have a football and it has been dragged to the front on every possible occasion since to serve a purpose. Whatever may be said about it, the real facts of the case are, that there is very little difference between the position of the parties upon the question, except that there is a definite knowledge as to the intentions of the Conservative party, but a very indefinite knowledge, indeed, as to where the Liberal party stands, one branch of it being in favor of more drastic measures in what is called the coercion of Manitoba, than have yet been suggested, while the other branch of it is entirely opposed to remedial legislation of any kind or character. A fair statement, perhaps, as to the general status of both parties is, that both agree that Manitoba, itself, should settle the question; both agree that in the event of Manitoba not settling the question, it is a duty devolving on the federal government under the decision of the Imperial Privy Council, to take the matter up; both agree that the proper way for the federal government to do this is by conciliatory methods, and both agree that in the event of failure to reach a satisfactory result in this way a remedial bill should be passed by the federal government that

would grant such a measure of relief as the circumstances of the case justify. Of course the are extremists on both sides of the question as to the extent of the relief that should be granted—there are Conservatives and Liberals who hold every shade of opinion, from the rankest anti-remedial to the most extreme pro-Catholic views, but it is fair, perhaps, to assume that the leaders of the two parties—Sir Charles Tupper, and Mr. Laurier—fairly represent the consensus of opinion in their respective parties; and, briefly stated, this is, on the part of Sir Charles, such remedial legislation only as is dictated by a sense of justice to the minority, and a proper respect to the highest legal tribunal in the empire; and on the part of Mr. Laurier, a remedial bill which will give to the Roman Catholic minority in Manitoba exactly the same privileges as to separate schools as are enjoyed by the Catholics of Ontario in the separate school system that prevails in that province, and as are likewise enjoyed by the Protestant minority in Quebec, with every other possible concession that can be obtained to satisfy his terms of a majority.

It is really, therefore, not a question of remedial legislation at all between the parties, but more a question of the EXTENT OF THE REMEDY that should be granted. Mr. Laurier's ideas as to this being much more extensive than those, being a Catholic, than those of Sir Charles Tupper.

It is beginning now to be seen that the difference between the two great parties on the school question is infinitesimally small. Where they really do differ is on the trade question and on the best way of developing the resources of the Dominion. The leading Grits are to a man free-traders, and their record shows that they are timid and unenterprising. The leading Conservatives are, on the contrary, all protectionists, and they have shown that they have faith in their country and are not afraid to do what is necessary to make its immense resources immediately available. The Liberals of Canada have proved themselves to be the party of stagnation, while the Conservatives have shown over and over again that they are the party of progress.

NOT TO BE EUCHRED.

The Times is chuckling over the fact that Conservatives in the East differ on the subject of remedial legislation. To judge from present appearances the Grits will gain very little from this difference of opinion among Eastern Conservatives. These men are all of them Conservatives first. They do not intend to allow the Grits to enchain them by making the school question paramount. They consider that they would be false to their principles and would do what would be most injurious to the welfare of Canada if they permitted their political opponents to blind them to the necessity of upholding the National Policy. They do not propose, because they cannot agree with some members of their party as to the policy to be pursued towards Manitoba, to abandon the industries of the Dominion to the tender mercies of Grit free traders. Our readers will be able clearly to understand the position which the anti-remedial Conservatives take when they read the following report of two short speeches made by staunch Conservatives who were members of the convention which chose Mr. G. R. R. Cockburn, late M. P., the nominee of the Conservative party for the representation of Centre Toronto in the Dominion House of Commons:

Mr. W. K. McNaught said that while he did not eye to eye with Mr. Cockburn on the Remedial bill, that gentleman's course in Parliament had been such that he should heartily support him. The fighting in Toronto would never take place in that constituency, and it behooved every Conservative to rally to the support of the nominee of the convention. Mr. Cockburn had been a consistent supporter of the National Policy, from which Toronto had benefited as much as any place in the country. The trade policy was, or should be, the chief issue in the contest. If the Liberals came into power they would sweep the National Policy away, and he for one was determined therefore to oppose them to the utmost extent of his power. (Cheers.)

Mr. W. B. Newsome declared himself a little tired of hearing "hands off Manitoba." The real cry was "hands off the National Policy." They were not there to fight the Remedial bill, but to fight the Grits. "Let's take a shy at the Reformers," said the speaker, "and stop quarrelling among ourselves. I am heartily sick of it; it's so utterly absurd."

This is how Toronto Conservatives look upon the principal questions at issue in the present election contest. They agree to differ on the school question; but they unite on what has hitherto been and still is the principal plank of the Conservative platform—Protection to native industries—and as a consequence Toronto will be represented

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In the next House of Commons by four uncompromising Conservatives. . . And this is how the Conservatives of Winnipeg and elsewhere regard the main issue of the contest.

VERY SMALL. Nothing is too small for the Times to notice. A typographical error was unaccountably made in a paragraph that appeared in our Tuesday's issue. The word "Herald" was printed instead of "Gazette," written plainly in the copy. No one that had a particle of sense and knew anything about the Herald would for a moment suppose that the paragraph could have appeared in the Herald. The Times, no doubt, will be pleased to learn that the correction was made in the semi-weekly edition that went to press yesterday morning.

EDITORIAL COMMENT. The Times, with its usual veracity, said Sir Donald Smith had gone out of politics because he was ashamed to be associated with Sir Charles Tupper. Sir Donald has been entertaining Sir Charles at his house in Montreal. What has the veracious scandal-monger of the Times to say to that?

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OUR OTTAWA

Col. Walker Powe Recipient of Fair B. Royal Society at Long Looked Fair.

From Our Own OTTAWA, May 20. and Kingston field members to Englan on the Shoeburmes attives of the Otta batteries will be su The Royal Society day, some valuable the different sectio Lord and Lady A den party in hon To-night there was in the Normal schoo inal poems and ess the French Literary William Smith, of marine, has retu He says the report mittee upon the m define a scale of cr classes of vessels, b considered a ship w The members of this year practice fo in England on the politian Rifle Club place of Cambridge It is currently name of Col. Walk jutant-general of n the Canadian mil found among the re Birthday among the The Governor-Ge review in Montre Birthday. The department been notified from medals and awards Fair will be sent o John McDougald customs, has arrive mence his duties in

A QUESTION OF SEATTLE, May 11 jurisdiction of the peals on cases from Alaska, in admiralt under the revenue was decided yester States supreme co Coquitlam case, in that the circuit cou Ninth circuit has ju case. The news w Hughes, of the fi Hughes & McKick Calverton Carlisle, ish embassy at W telegram, as follow "E. C. Hughes day decided that th peals, Ninth circu Coquitlam case, i issue immediately. The case involve national promineng the period wher and Great Britai Behring sea cont mode vivendi was er Coquitlam had catch of a numb amounting to over by the revenue ut 1892, and turned ment. The cargo Vance over and Vi an action in the di and engaged Mr. them. The case v against them in Se An appeal was fi cut court of appea trict, sitting in Charles A. Garter, Northern Californ for the government the cargo-owners, and submitted, bu could be reached torney raised the tion of the court from the Alaska briefs and argued after which the cided to certify United States su tated more briefs United States sup two weeks ago it the above result. A decision which case within a sho tion settled one w decided in favor of appeal will then b court.

GOING U LONDON, May 1 ian expedition up without the slig wishes appear to moralized, thoug bidding their time, a powerful blow v arrives. The g troops given great s fidence to the Egyptian troops sent to the Nile, the operations w in earnest after summer passes vance begins in t it is possible to cess of the exp done. Spies rep Dongla has app reinforcements, able to oppose th the present forc Khalifa, it is ad nments to Dongo is said to be troops from b anxiously festival. Upon expects crowds of Ondurman and tage of this to posts from the the serious Central Soudan.