

The Colonist.

FRIDAY, JULY 1, 1892.

THE HON. JOHN ROBSON.

When the Hon. John Robson died British Columbians lost one of their best friends and most faithful and devoted servants. He was not a demonstrative patriot, but those who knew him well saw that he had a true patriot's heart. The great object of his life was to do good to his country. His time, his talents, his energies were ungrudgingly spent in its service. In his efforts to do it good he wore himself out, and became an old man before his time. He was so absorbed in his public duties that he did not allow himself the rest and the recreation which, to a man who worked so hard and so continuously as he did, are an absolute necessity. It was only when his failing health warned him that he was putting too great a strain on his constitution that he thought of taking a rest. He hoped that his mission to England to further a public enterprise which he had greatly at heart would afford him the change which he knew was needed to prevent his breaking down utterly. But it is now seen that he had already drawn too heavily on his store of vitality, and that his body had lost the power of recuperation. He went to England, not to recover his health and to restore his failing bodily powers, but he went to die. He died at his post, doing his duty. His work was done, and he went to his rest. It was, however much we may be shocked at its suddenness, and however deeply we may grieve over the loss of so good and so useful a man, a fitting end for such a life as was led by our patriot Premier.

The Hon. John Robson was a self-made man. He fought his way upwards by sheer dint of ability and energy. His struggle was long and strenuous, but he at last obtained the recognition he deserved. He possessed great intellectual capacity, was quick of perception and remarkably clear-headed. He was a forcible writer and an impressive speaker. In manner he was serious, but very many found that under a rather cold exterior there were a warm heart and a kindly nature. Mr. Robson was one of those Christians who did not let his left hand know what his right hand did. Of him it could literally be said that he "did good by stealth and blushed to find it fame." It would appear that Mr. Robson was constitutionally averse to ostentation of all kinds, and the consequence was that it was only those who knew him very intimately that had any idea of the depth of his feelings and the tenderness of his nature.

The late Premier was an exemplary man in every relation of life. His manner of living was simple almost to asceticism. He was a zealous and consistent member of the Presbyterian Church, and he aided liberally and cheerfully by his voice, his presence and his purse, every good work. He was a staunch and fearless advocate of the cause of temperance. In his private life, as in his public, he was serious and earnest, and what his hand found to do he did with all his might. The Hon. John Robson lived a noble life.

"Not making his high place the lawless perch of winged ambition, nor a vantage ground for pleasure; but thro' all his brief years wearing the white flower of a blameless life before a thousand peering littlenesses."

REORGANIZATION.

The death of the Hon. John Robson breaks up the Government. It will be necessary to choose a new Premier and to reorganize the Administration. We trust that the Lieutenant-Governor will call upon the Hon. Mr. Pooley to take the place of the deceased Premier. He possesses the requisite ability and he enjoys the confidence of the country. The Conservative party of the Province look to Mr. Pooley for guidance in the present crisis and we are greatly mistaken if he will disappoint them.

A SUGGESTION.

All acknowledge that the Hon. John Robson served the people of this Province well and faithfully. A public funeral will be a fitting though an inadequate indication of the esteem in which he has been held by British Columbians of all classes and parties. We are quite sure that the suggestion that this token of respect be paid to his memory has only to be made to be universally and eagerly accepted.

WELL DONE.

We are glad to see that the City Council had the good sense to strike the unnecessary restrictive clause out of the Victoria and Sidney Railway by-law. The clause would have done a great deal of harm and would have been a benefit to neither the ratepayers nor the workmen. It would, indeed, if allowed to remain, have effectively prevented the road's being built. That result would have been a misfortune to Victoria. The construction of the road will be advantageous to the whole Spanish peninsula and to the islands of the Gulf as well as to Victoria. It will, by bringing a market almost to the doors of the settlers, encourage settlement. The farmers and gardeners will, when the road is built, be in point of fact, in the suburbs of Victoria, and there can be no question then, when the land is all well cultivated and when every few acres has its comfortable homestead, that the trade of the city will be greatly increased. The citizens, too, will have the advantage of getting their milk, butter, eggs, fruit, vegetables and meat fresh, and in abundance. There is fertile land enough in the peninsula, if well cultivated, to yield the city a plentiful supply of most of these necessities for very many years to come. When the road is built, there is nothing to

hinder the whole peninsula being transformed into one great garden. The farmer and gardener will then have good land, a good market, good prices, and cheap transport. What more can they want? We trust that the project will now be carried out to a successful conclusion.

THE DISSOLUTION.

The Imperial Parliament is at last dissolved, and Great Britain is now in the throes of a general election. It has been, for some time, known that the dissolution would take place in the near future, but the Government were very slow in deciding upon its exact date. It cannot be said, therefore, that the election has been sprung upon the country. Both parties have had ample time for preparation, and both have been preparing. For the last three months at least every move of the politicians, of both parties, was made with a view to the impending election. The organizers have been busy measuring the strength of their respective parties and calculating the chances of success. Candidates have been chosen in all the constituencies. Important speeches had been made by the leaders, manifestos had been drawn up, published and circulated, and all the machinery of a general election had been set in motion before the dissolution was proclaimed.

The Government go to the country confident of being returned by a good working majority. The union between the Conservatives and Liberal Unionists is as close and as strong as it was six years ago. The different sections of the Government party are loyal to each other and as determined as ever to maintain the integrity of the Empire. Whatever the feeling may be among the electors, there is really no distinction of party among the supporters of the Government. Mr. Goschen and Mr. Chamberlain are, to all intents and purposes, as staunch Conservatives as are Mr. Balfour, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. Liberal Unionists will fight shoulder to shoulder and stand or fall together.

The Salisbury Government has a good record. None of its supporters will have to apologize for its acts. Its foreign policy has, on the admission of even its opponents, been firm and judicious. It has been successful in making Ireland peaceful and in helping it to be prosperous. Ireland is today in a better and more hopeful condition than it was six years ago. This bitterest enemies of the Government will not have the audacity to deny. The Conservative Government have given the counties of Great Britain the control of their own affairs. The extension of democratic institutions to the English and Scotch counties has proved to be a beneficial change, and is no doubt appreciated by the people. The Salisbury Government has made education in a great measure free, and it has passed a measure making it possible for the British farm laborer to have a bit of land for himself and his reduced taxation. All this and much more has the Salisbury Administration done for Great Britain, and it can therefore confidently appeal to the electors for a continuance of their support.

The Opposition have little else to go to the country upon than a large number of fine promises clothed in grandiose language. The indefiniteness of Mr. Gladstone's programme is a matter of general complaint. He has not said plainly what he intends to do with respect to Ireland, or indeed, anything else. It may be that he will before election day, take the people into his confidence, but it may then be too late. There can be no doubt that Mr. Gladstone has lost ground of late.

A FRIENDLY ACT.

Mr. H. Seton-Karr, who is favorably known to the readers of the Colonist, has not forgotten British Columbia. He is ready to further its interests in the House of Commons, of which he is a member, and he has a good word to say of it in the London Times in connection with the crofter scheme. Writing about colonization to the London Times, he gives its readers some of the particulars of that scheme, and adds:

"The practical meaning of this, in that during the next few years opportunity will be given to 1,250 crofter families to leave the comparatively barren and rocky shores of North Britain, where the increase of population appears to be in inverse ratio to the acreage of land and possible means of livelihood, and to become ultimate freeholders in a more temperate and equable climate, twelve days' journey from Liverpool, under the British flag, and where the wealth and area of sea fishery, timber, and agricultural land far exceed anything of the kind at home."

"Last autumn I had an opportunity of visiting a valley on the west coast of the island of Vancouver, one of many similar localities now available for crofter colonization on the Pacific coast. It is sufficient to say that the resources of this valley, at present undeveloped or merely 'surface-scratched,' have been up to now practically monopolized by a small band of about fifty Indians all told, far inferior in energy and physique, in brain power and education, to our own crofter and farming race, and yet who manage to enjoy a comfort and prosperity to which thousands of our farming and laboring classes at home, though hard-working and temperate, always have been, and if they remain at home always will be, strangers."

Mr. Seton-Karr has formed a true estimate of the capabilities of this province. The conditions under which the settler works in redeeming its cultivatable soil from the wilderness are most favorable. The land is good and the climate genial. There are very few days in the year in which some kind of work cannot be done on the farm. The crofter who is, in most cases, a skilled fisherman has in addition the inexhaustible treasures of the sea to draw from. We believe that arrangements will be made which will cause fishing on this island to be a profitable business for thousands of hardy colonists from Scotland and elsewhere.

INJUDICIOUS CODDLING.

In our last issue we underated the Mayor's grandmotherly interference with the proposed contract for the Victoria and Sidney Railway. Not only would we re-evaluate the contractors as to the kind of labor they shall employ, the hours the men are to work, and when they must be paid, but we even go so far as to indicate the rate of wages they shall receive. If he has his way the men who contract to build the road will be tied hand and foot. They will have no freedom whatever. The Mayor's restrictions are made apparently in the interests of the working men, and he, no doubt, wishes them to believe that he is morning for their welfare. But discerning working men must see that this meddling and fussing must result in injury to them, for it will, if carried into effect, prevent the road's being built at all. What contractor will be so foolish as to undertake to build the whole road or a section of it under a contract which hampers him in every direction? Besides, the workmen of the Victoria are not such babies as to want the Mayor to make their bargains for them. When the contractor has bound himself not to employ Chinamen he may safely leave white men to make their own bargains. They are intelligent enough and independent enough to look after their own interests. Such interference as Mr. Beaven proposes is much more calculated to hurt workmen than to help them. It takes from them both self-respect and self-reliance, and has a tendency to transform them into mere machines. In this case we are quite sure that it will have even a worse effect than this, for it will effectually kill the project and leave them without the work they would get if the contractors are drawn up in such a way that prudent men would feel justified in putting their names to them.

STILL NEGLECTED.

We are not at all surprised that Mr. Earle complains that the assurances he received in Ottawa, year after year, come to nothing. It has long been evident to every one who is competent to form an opinion on the subject, that Victoria needs, and needs badly, a new Custom House and a new Post Office. There is no city in the Dominion which contributes anything like as much to the general revenue as Victoria does that is not very much better supplied with both Post Office and Custom House accommodation. The Custom House and Post Office here are both mean looking, and do not afford sufficient accommodation for the work to be done in them. Instead of being a credit to the Dominion and ornaments to the city, they are a reproach to the one and disfigurements to the other. And now our Ottawa correspondent tells us that, instead of being promised the new and handsome structures that Victoria ought to have, it is proposed to patch up the old buildings. Our correspondent very frankly says that "when the Government does anything, it will be in the nature of rebuilding on its present site, or, in other words, fixing up the present building and extending it, if that can consistently be done." So it appears that a favor is to be made of even this coddling, and it is by no means certain that it is intended to do even this in the near future. We trust that the ministers will pay their promised visit to Victoria. When they come here they will find that the citizens are not prepared, Lamorne-like, thankfully to pick up the crumbs that fall from the table of the favored ones of the East. They will find here men who are both independent and indignant—men who feel that this city has been unjustly treated hitherto with respect to its public buildings, and who are in no humor to put up with further neglect and injustice. They will find no one in Victoria who will listen to a proposal to "fix up" the old Custom House and to patch the Post Office, or to leave it an indefinite time longer in its present disgraceful condition. Victorians have been consistent and zealous supporters of the Government's policy, but they do not consider that their party loyalty requires them to submit tamely and silently to gross neglect and glaring injustice.

"THE MARITIME PROVINCES."

We find that those who write and speak about the Maritime Provinces of the Dominion invariably refer to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. They do not seem to think that there is another Maritime Province of the Dominion which is quite as important as any of those that are spoken of as "The Maritime Provinces." British Columbia borders on the ocean, and it has a greater area than all the other Maritime Provinces put together. Its resources are quite as varied, and, we believe, very much richer than those of the Eastern Maritime Provinces. Its fisheries are practically inexhaustible. The fish which swarm in the waters of British Columbia, are of many varieties, and their commercial value is quite as great as are those of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island—with the products of the Quebec fisheries thrown in. Although this province is, so to speak, in its infancy. The value of its export of fish was last year \$2,774,654. The export of Nova Scotia, which has more than four times British Columbia's population and, as a colony, five times its area, was \$4,936,666. The value of the fish exported from New Brunswick last year was \$906,809, and to those of P. E. Island \$480,239. The minerals exported from this western maritime province are worth considerably more than those of any of the Eastern provinces by the sea. Nova Scotia exported \$877,250 worth of the products of the mine last year. British Columbia's export is valued at \$2,930,229. New Brunswick's export was \$60,919, and Prince Edward

Island had no minerals of any kind to export. The timber resources of the Eastern maritime provinces are well developed, while those of this western province have been only touched. Nova Scotia's export of timber was, in 1891, \$1,671,547. New Brunswick's was \$3,982,734. British Columbia's was \$394,906, and the value of P. E. Island's export of the products of the forest was only \$11,224.

When the total trade of the different Maritime Provinces of the Dominion is compared, the relative greatness of that of British Columbia will strike most readers with surprise. It must be borne in mind that the population of British Columbia is, according to the census, considerably less than that of even the smallest of the Maritime Provinces of the east. The following is a statement of the population of those provinces as it is set down in the census of 1891:

Nova Scotia.....	450,396
New Brunswick.....	321,263
P. E. Island.....	109,078
British Columbia.....	97,613

It will, however, be found that the 97,613 inhabitants of British Columbia, many for man, produce a great deal more, consume a great deal more, and pay into the revenue a great deal more than the inhabitants of the Eastern Maritime Provinces, or, in fact, those of any other provinces of the Dominion. The exports of the several Maritime Provinces were, in the year ending June 30, 1891:

Nova Scotia.....	\$9,785,063
New Brunswick.....	7,182,768
P. E. Island.....	1,349,126
British Columbia.....	6,196,230

The imports of the provinces were for the same year—

Nova Scotia.....	\$9,497,401
New Brunswick.....	5,825,070
P. E. Island.....	623,248
British Columbia.....	5,477,141

The duties paid into the Dominion Treasury by the Maritime Provinces and the rate per capita were as follows—

	Duty.	Per Capita.
Nova Scotia.....	\$1,875,595	\$4.16
New Brunswick.....	1,393,072	4.30
P. E. Island.....	155,952	1.40
British Columbia.....	1,344,059	12.79

From this it is seen that a British Columbian pays every year into the Treasury of the Dominion more than three times as much as a Nova Scotian or a New Brunswicker, and nine times as much as a Prince Edward Islander. The British Columbian pays not only a great deal more into the Dominion Treasury than the eastern Maritime Province man, but very much more than the average Canadian. The whole Customs revenue of the Dominion was, last year, \$23,481,699. Reckoning the population at five millions, the sum paid per capita was \$4.69, but, as we have seen, the contribution to the Customs revenue of every British Columbian was \$13.79. When the very large proportionate amount per head paid by the inhabitants of British Columbia is considered, it must be admitted that the Dominion Government is bound in justice to deal liberally with that province.

A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

The Toronto Mail, which is not by any means in love with the present Government, and particularly with its French-Canadian members, says that "Mr. Chapleau deserves to be commended for the attention he has given to the Customs Department since he has been at the head of that bureau, and for the effort he is making to reform its abuses." One of the abuses which Mr. Chapleau has set about reforming is that connected with seizures. There have been, of late years, a great many complaints with respect to the way in which seizures are made and with respect to the manner in which the money realized has been disposed of. What our contemporary says about the change that has been made and about the abuse that still exists is so sensible and so timely that we think it well worth reproducing. It says:

"Now the new Minister has looked into the moiety system under which Customs officers have added so handsomely to their incomes. In his investigation he has been materially helped both by the discussions in the press and the reports made by and to the Civil Service Board. The Commissioners heard Mr. Johnson upon the subject, and he declared that officials of the inside service, at least, should not share in the proceeds of seizures. Mr. Johnson's view was adopted by the Commissioners, and they reported that the payment of any Ottawa officers for seizures made by him was an abuse. Mr. Chapleau appears to have regarded with favor the opinions thus expressed, for an Order-in-Council just issued

on his recommendation modifies the regulations having reference to seizures. In future regular seizing officers may receive one-third of the proceeds of the seizure; but collectors of customs and other officers receiving less than \$2,000 a year may receive only one-half, while officials receiving \$2,000 a year or more, and all officers of the inside service, that is to say, departmental officers, shall receive nothing. The changed regulations, which come in force on July 1, are a great improvement upon those heretofore in force under which the harassment of merchants by seizing officers was directed by promoted. But while the amendment is commendable, so far as it goes, it can scarcely be said that it goes far enough. A sharp distinction should be drawn between smuggling goods and goods in respect of which the Government can be no party to smuggling operations. It is, through its officers who inspect and pass the invoices and goods, as much responsible for under-valuation as the importers themselves. It is unfair that one set of officers should pass goods below their value, and that another set of officers, or possibly the same set, should turn upon the merchants and claim money from them for an offence in respect of which they had no guilty intent."

It must be admitted that it does look singular to see Customs House officers months, and sometimes years, after the entries have been regularly made, without a single exception being taken to the valuations, taking proceedings against the merchant who may have had no intention to defraud the revenue, and profiting by their own ignorance or neglect. We have, indeed, heard of officers allowing entries, which they believed to be fraudulent, to pass until a big enough pile had accumulated, and then proceeding upon the unsuspecting importer. The Mail is right when it says that a sharp distinction should be drawn between smuggled goods and goods in respect to which charges of under-valuation have been made.

CO-OPERATION.

There are many who see in co-operation the happy solution of the great labor problem. A trial has been made of co-operation in many countries, but its success has as yet been only partial. Co-operation in distribution has been in a very great measure successful. It has been found that co-operative stores can be made to pay, and that through their means the consumer can get the best articles at the lowest possible cost and also a nice little dividend of profit. Some of the co-operative concerns in Great Britain do an immense business, and they do it well. But co-operation in production has not been nearly so successful. The reason given is that, though the co-operators are very willing to share profits, they become restless and discontented when they are required to bear their fair proportion of losses. In France and in the United States men have been found to co-operate on true business principles, and their success has given some encouragement to those who regard co-operation as a cure for the evils from which labor suffers. But the history of co-operative production in England is the account of a series of lamentable failures. It is because of these failures that many of the friends of labor in England have come to the conclusion that co-operation in production can never be made to pay. But there are some enthusiasts who are of a different opinion. The whole question was fully and intelligently discussed at the annual Co-operative Congress, which met at Rochdale at the beginning of the present month. From the papers read and the speeches made at that Congress we gather that there are good men who still have faith in co-operative production, who, to use the words of the president, "believe that the profits of all trade, industry, commerce, importations, banking and money dealing should fall back again into the hands of the whole people." The members of this Congress may be set down by some of our readers as theorists and enthusiasts, but it must be admitted that their theories are harmless and their enthusiasm philanthropic.

THE INHOSPITABLE RUSSIAN.

The expulsion of Mr. Poutney Bigelow and Mr. Frederick Remington from Russia shows how watchful the minions of the Czar are, and how difficult it is for any one, even a stranger, who has by speaking freely, made himself obnoxious to his Government, to escape observation. Mr. Bigelow is a writer, as well as a traveller; he has criticized the acts and the methods of the Russian Government pretty sharply in articles that have been published in Europe and America. He and Mr. Remington, who is an American artist of some celebrity, proposed to make a canoe voyage from Russia to Germany. Mr. Bigelow was to take notes of what he saw and heard, and Mr. Remington was to draw sketches illustrative of his companion's travels. The two gentlemen were armed with exceptional passports bearing the signature of the late Secretary of State, Mr. Blaine. It was expected that, accredited in this way, they would be allowed to pursue their journey through Russia unwatched and unmolested. But they reckoned without the Czar. Mr. Bigelow soon found to his cost that he was known, and unfavorably to the Russian authorities. The travellers were visited by agents of the Minister of Police, and not too civilly informed that they must leave the country. Their canoes were seized and they were conveyed to the Russian frontier. What the United States Government will have to say to this unprovoked treatment of United States citizens remains to be seen. If two American travellers were treated in this way in any part of the British Empire, the travellers would be visited by agents of the Minister of Police, and not too civilly informed that they must leave the country. Their canoes were seized and they were conveyed to the Russian frontier. What the United States Government will have to say to this unprovoked treatment of United States citizens remains to be seen. 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