The Colonist.

TUESDAY, JUNE 19, 1900.

THE NEW CABINET.

Mr. Dunsmuir was sworn in yesterday afternoon, and will occupy the position of President of the Council. Mr. Turner was also sworn in as Finance Minister and Mr. Eberts as Attorney-General. This leaves three portfolios at Mr. Dunsmuir's disposal, and they will be given to gentlemen representing Mainland constituencies.

We have every reason to believe that the ministers to be chosen will be strong and thoroughly representative men, and will complete a cabinet that will meet the confidence of the house and the people of the province.

THE WAR.

News from Roberts is very satisfactory. He understands that the army which has been confronting him has retired to Middleburg, which is the most important town between Pretoria and the Portuguese frontier. It is 94 miles from Pretoria. The London rumor that he is treating with Kruger and Botha as to terms of peace, through the medium of Mrs. Kruger and Mrs. Botha, may have a very solid foundation. In view of what is transpiring in China, it is quite possible that Lord Salisbury may be disposed to bring the war to a conclusion as rapidly as can be done, and if all that is at stake is a matter of terms as to Kruger and his commanders, some conciliation may be extended.

We heard from Rundle yesterday morning, and he seems to be driving Steyn into a corner. Buller is thought to be already at Standerton, which is about one-third of the way between Laing's Nek and Johannesburg. Buller is to send a force down to Heidelberg. This will put our troops in three places along the railway, which runs near and almost parallel to the southern frontier of the Transvaal, namely, at Volksrust, Standerton and Heidelburg. Between 100 and 120 miles south of this line Rundle's three divisions are moving northward, and Steyn and his command are between the two lines. It ought not to be long now before we hear of the complete defeat, if not the capture, of the ex-Free State president.

Baden-Powell is coming up in splendid fashion from the west, and Hunter is making fine progress from the southwest. Indeed, the work that is being done on all sides is as satisfactory as could be wished.

Buller has been compelled to draw attention to the outrageous manner in which the enemy dealt with private property in Natal. The case which he makes out shows plainly enough that the commanding officers have been cognizant of this vandalism. It will have one good effect. It will destroy the last remnant of sympathy felt for the Boers, who have shown themselves to be no better than savages in many particulars.

There seems to be a troublesome lot of fellows along the railway between Bloemfontein and Pretoria, and Methuen is having a busy time of it protecting the railway from their sudden raids. Their movements are such as no commanding officer can foresee, and will probably prove vexatious until, by some good stroke of fortune, Methuen is able to get hold of the leader of the marauders.

THE NEW PREMIER.

If any one may judge from telegrams received and from expressions of opinion throughout the city, there is already manifest a new feeling of security as to the business interests of the province, owing to the acceptance of the Premiership by Mr. James Dunsmuir. This is natural, for the extent of Mr. Dunsmuir's private interests is the best possible guarantee that so far as he is able to guide it, future legislation in British Columbia will be along lines that will foster the investment of capital and create settled conditions. At the same time it must not be forgotten that Mr. Dunsmuir is the largest individual employer of labor in British Columbia. During his canvass in South Wellington he told his employees that he wished to get closer to them, to understand their needs and to meet them as fully as he could. We believe that in the broader field of responsibility upon which he has entered this same principle will guide him. It is impossible to talk with him on the political situation without being impressed by his determination to do simply what is right. We believe this will be the keynote of his administration and are satisfied that the wage-earners of this province will find that they have no truer friend than James Dunsmuir.

Notwithstanding his immense interests and his long residence in British Columbia, Mr. Dunsmuir is not personally very generally known. He has been a busy man all his life and is retiring in disposition. Those who know him best trust him the most, and have the most confidence in the singleness of his motives and his desire to deal fairly by all. He is a good fighter and when he thinks he is being imposed upon will stand by his guns without flinching. He showed this in respect to the anti-Chinese legislation. He believed that an effort was being made to interfere with his constitutional rights as a British subject and notwithstanding the outcry against him, he fought the legislation in question until it was declared unconstitutional by the highest court in the Empire. When he had established his right in the premises beyond all question, and after the report of the Royal Commission appointed by the provincial government, which was certainly not unfavorable to his contention, he came forward and voluntarily offered to dismiss all Chinese miners from his employ as soon as white men could be got to fill their places. This promise will be kept. Mr. Dunsmuir's opponent at the late election was and is his employee. At a meeting held at one of his mines, Mr. Dunsmuir said: "Mr. Radcliffe asked me the other night if I would put him out of the mine because he was running against me, and I told him I would not. He then asked me if I would interfere with his sons, and I said I would not." Then he added: "You have been told that I would know how you vote and would discharge those who vote against me. I tell you that I will not know, and that if any one of you thinks that Mr. Radcliffe is a better man to represent you than I am, you are at perfect liberty to vote for him, and I only ask you to vote for me if you think I am likely to be the better man for the place." This is the language of the man who is now Premier of British Columbia, and it gives an insight into his character that is most gratifying. The interests of capitalists will have no better friend in Premier Dunsmuir than will the interests of the wage-earners.

The new Premier will bring to bear upon the discharge of his duties business ability of a high order. He has been accustomed for years to deal with large enterprises. The great establishments of what is ordinarily spoken of as Comox, at South Wellington, at Extension and at Ladysmith show a degree of constructive ability and a mastery of details of no ordinary character. Many people suppose that Mr. Dunsmuir is simply a man who inherited a good property and kept it together. He is much more than this. He has vastly developed the interests which came into his control upon his father's death. The things which have been done at Extension alone during the last two years, if they had been achieved anywhere else on the Pacific Coast, would have been the subject of columns of description and laudatory editorial.

We believe that British Columbia will have in Mr. Dunsmuir a strong and progressive Premier. He will be Premier in fact as well as in name. He may not display what our friends in the United States call "meteoric statesmanship." He will go forward cautiously, but resolutely. His own financial position is as well assured as any man can desire, and he has no object to serve in accepting office but the promotion of the welfare of the province. All that the Colonist asks is that he be given a fair chance to prove his ability and sincerity. This we are confident he will have and the result will be the inauguration of a period of substantial prosperity, as far as it can be promoted by anything within the power of the legislature led by a business-like and patriotic government.

THE BUSINESS OUTLOOK.

Some prominent authorities in the business world have expressed the opinion that business conditions during the next twelve months will not be quite as favorable as they have been. They do not anticipate bad times, but only that there will be a general tendency to go a little slow. The reason for this is the general disturbed state of the political world. Presidential years in the United States are usually poor years from a business point of view, and that country plays so large a part in the commerce and financial affairs of the world that what affects it to any considerable degree will be felt far and wide. The disturbed conditions in China afford another reason for expecting the adoption of a conservative policy by the large financial houses. The South African war is another reason. While every one concedes that this conflict will soon be over, the uncertainty as to the time when peace will be proclaimed adds to the embarrassment of the situation. It is quite certain that after the war there will be a great rush to South Africa, and pending it investors will hesitate about locking up their funds.

We think, however, that so far as Canada is concerned, business conditions will be steady, and that the current year will, upon the whole, turn out as satisfactory as last. In our own province, we look for better times. One instance has already come under our notice where the representative of a very considerable amount of British capital was induced by the result of the election to remain in the province and look for investments. The constantly expanding business of Atlin and the Yukon valley will have an excellent general effect, and we anticipate that there will be no further difficulty in new capital being invested. The outlook Kootenay, where there is a prospect of on Vancouver Island is also very satisfactory from a mining point of view.

THE LIMIT OF RESPONSIBILITY.

What degree of responsibility does Mr. Dunsmuir assume by accepting the premiership? We suppose this question was asked of the Colonist a dozen times yesterday. The answer is very simple. He assumes the responsibility for the act of the Lieutenant-Governor in accepting the resignation of Mr. Martin and his own selection as premier. Further than this his constitutional responsibility does not extend. Those who suggest that he also assumes the responsibility of the acts of the Lieutenant-Governor in connection with the formation of the Semlin government, its dismissal, the calling in of Mr. Martin, and Mr. Martin's official acts, simply forget what ministerial responsibility means. Mr. Semlin had to assume the responsibility of the dismissal of the Turner ministry, because he took office in consequence of such dismissal. Mr. Martin assumed the responsibility of Mr. Semlin's dismissal, not only theoretically, but in point of fact, and he could not shirk it if he had wished to do so, because he accepted office as a consequence of such dismissal. Mr. Martin was not dismissed. The action of the Lieutenant-Governor in calling upon him to form a government was submitted to the people, and the people pronounced adversely upon it. In compliance with the popular verdict Mr. Martin retired, and thus ended that incident as far as any question of ministerial responsibility goes. Gubernatorial responsibility must not be confounded with ministerial responsibility. The Lieutenant-Governor is responsible constitutionally only to the Governor-General. The ministers are responsible to the people, through their representatives.

The reason that there is some confusion in some minds on this point is because they fail to recognize that the dismissal of a lieutenant-governor is in theory the same as a successful revolution in the United Kingdom against the reigning sovereign. Let us suppose, for the purpose of testing the theory, that Her Majesty should select a minister in defiance of the wish of the House of Commons, and that on an appeal to the people the minister so chosen should be defeated. In such a case would it be claimed for a moment that no one should accept the responsibility of forming a ministry in compliance with the popular verdict, but that the sovereign should be first dethroned? Will it be claimed that every election terminating in the defeat of a ministry chosen by the sovereign must be followed by revolution? Surely not. Let us apply the principle to the condition existing in this province. On Saturday last the people, by an enormous majority, condemned the Martin government. It so happened that Mr. Martin was elected, but he might have been defeated in Vancouver as he was in Victoria. The accident of his election—we use the word "accident" in no offensive sense—does not alter the situation in the slightest degree. His ministry was completely overthrown. Let us suppose he had been defeated. Will any one contend that no ministry could be formed which would not accept the responsibility of his appointment? Mr. Dunsmuir, if he accepts any responsibility at all in regard to Mr. Martin, accepts the responsibility for his defeat, not of his appointment. His premiership is the consequence of Mr. Martin's defeat; how, then, can it be claimed that he accepts the responsibility of his appointment? If no one could accept the premiership without assuming the responsibility for Mr. Martin's appointment, what would have happened in case he had been personally defeated? Would he have been obliged to remain premier in spite of the expressed will of the people and his own desire to resign, and if not, how could "the Queen's government go on"? Suppose the Ottawa ministry should decline to interfere as regards the Lieutenant-Governor, would we have to put up with Mr. Martin forever, or else have no government at all, for we take it that no government could possibly be formed out of the present house that would accept the responsibility for the selection of Mr. Martin for the premiership?

Lieutenant-Governor McInnes' term of office is a thing quite apart from the formation of a government which will give effect to the popular verdict. It is something which depends upon the Ottawa government. The two things must not be confounded, for there is no connection whatever between them.

We repeat that by accepting the premiership Mr. Dunsmuir only accepts the responsibility of giving effect to the popular verdict in condemnation of the Martin government. He does not become the apologist or champion of the Lieutenant-Governor. His appointment is simply a return to Responsible Government.

A "SON" MYTH.

At a public meeting held in Northfield during the late election campaign, Mr. W. W. B. McInnes stated that his father, the Lieutenant-Governor, had asked the Ottawa government to relieve him of his office. He said that this request had been made at least twice. The matter was brought up in parliament by Col. Prior, and we printed yesterday a report of what was said. Readers will have observed that Sir Wilfrid Laurier said, when the matter was first brought to his attention, that he did not believe there had been any correspondence on the subject, and two days later he added that he could not remember any such request by correspondence. We may feel very sure that if any such request had been made, either by correspondence or otherwise, the Premier would remember it. Offers to resign the post of Lieutenant-Governor and requests to be relieved of it are not such common occurrences that they are apt to slip any one's memory. We think it may safely be concluded that Mr. W. W. B. McInnes was indulging in a little romance for the edification of the people of Northfield. The affair is really of no great importance one way or the other, but Sir Wilfrid Laurier's reply to Col. Prior puts Mr. W. W. B. McInnes in a not very enviable attitude before the public.

CHINESE EXCLUSION.

The bill introduced into the Dominion parliament increasing the poll tax on Chinese from $50 to $100 will be a distinct disappointment in this province, where it was hoped that the amount would be much larger. The increase will have some effect in decreasing the influx of Chinese, but will not anything like prevent it. There will be additional disappointment because the government has failed to introduce any provision similar to those of the Natal Act.

We are very glad, however, to see that Sir Wilfrid Laurier has been brought to see the necessity of immediate investigation into the whole question of Chinese and Japanese immigration, and its effects upon the labor market and otherwise. Such an inquiry, if honestly conducted, with a desire to get at the actual facts, must be productive of a great deal of good. The Colonist has already urged this course, and therefore gives the proposal its unqualified endorsement.

We are also glad to see that the Premier only regards the doubling of the head tax as a step in the right direction and not as a finality. This leads us to think that after the facts have been gathered by the proposed commission, additional legislation will be granted. In the meantime we must again express great regret at the smallness of the increase in the head tax. It might have been put at at least $200 without being open to the criticism that it was intended as a hostile step against a friendly nation. The only object of the tax is to keep Chinamen out of the country, and the increase to $100 will not, we think, have this effect to any considerable degree.

THE CIGARETTE EVIL.

The School Board had the cigarette evil brought under its notice at its meeting on Wednesday. This is a matter upon which some action is necessary. We do not care, as a rule, to advocate anything calculated to restrict individual liberty, but there are some things which call for interference. Cigarette smoking especially by young lads, is one of them. We find the following in an exchange:

Chicago is not famed for its sanctity, but it has some common sense left, and it has materialized in the placing of the cigarette smoker under a ban by one railroad company and three large mercantile firms. About 1,199 persons are affected by this regulation, some 900 of them being young men and boys. It is stated that nearly two-thirds of these youths have been using these baleful "smokes," and now they must either quit the habit or their work. The reasons given for the prohibition are as follows:

(1) Offensive breath to customers and non-cigarette-users.

(2) This form of nicotine demoralizes the employees and affects their honesty.

(3) The use of cigarettes makes employees nervous.

(4 The stunting of growth in boys; the befogment of memory; impairment of intellect.

(5) Physically the effect is such that the employers cannot get the best services from their employees.

Other business houses are being importuned to join in the movement in that city. The tobacco manufacturers themselves are greatly to blame for their hellish greed in manufacturing, and the dealers for conniving at the manufacture of such infernal machines as the modern cigarette; which contains little tobacco, and much that is pernicious to health, often actually poisonous to the blood and superinducing drunkenness, and the use of cocaine, opium, etc., because rum, cocaine, etc., are used to flavor the insipid stuff of which the cigarettes are usually made. The writer knew two boys, in the same family, aged 16 and 18, who died within six weeks of each other, from the use of the deadly cigarette.

Surely there is enough in such a state of things to call for action. We confess to being undecided as to what course to recommend, short of the absolute prohibition of the manufacture and sale of cigarettes. There may be some less heroic measure that will meet the case and keep young boys from doing themselves permanent injury by what appears to be an innocent habit; and if there is, we would like to be told what it is, so that we can do our share towards agitating for its adoption.

PROHIBITION IN MANITOBA.

Hugh John Macdonald has attempted a very serious experiment in introducing a prohibitory law into the Manitoba legislature. He says it is not a political measure, and the fact that Mr. Greenway, the ex-premier, has characterized it as one of the greatest reforms ever undertaken in Canada will do much to remove party opposition. The progress of the bill through the house will be watched with great interest, but much more depends upon the fate of the measure when its constitutionality is tested, as it is certain to be, and after that upon the manner in which it is enforced. If the law is simply enacted and then allowed to remain a dead letter for want of rigorous enforcement, the last stage of the movement will be worse than the first. This was the trouble with the Scott Act. The enforcement of any sumptuary law is attended with difficulty. A prohibitory law makes something an offence against the law, which previously was legal under certain conditions. The old common law differentiation between offences, as those that are "mala prohibita" and those that are "mala in se," that is, those acts which are wrong merely because they are prohibited and those which are intrinsically wrong, must be kept in mind when dealing with the liquor question. We all recognize certain things as intrinsically wrong, such as theft, murder treason and the like. We do not regard smuggling, the carrying on of a business without a license or the violation of the fisheries regulations as wrongful acts in themselves. They are wrong only because the doing of them has been prohibited by the law-making power. Men consider it to be their duty to assist in bringing to justice those who do things regarded as intrinsically wrong. No discredit attaches to the man, but rather, the reverse, who exerts himself to convict a murderer or a thief; but the majority of people do not feel called upon to aid the officers of the law in imposing penalties for the other class of offences. Law-abiding citizens may be quite well aware that the license law, or the customs law is being violated, but they will hesitate about giving information to the authorities, and in nine cases out of ten will shirk giving evidence in the case. There was undoubtedly much open and flagrant perjury in connection with the enforcement of the Scott Act. But this was not the reason why the act was so largely a failure. The real cause was the indifference of the community. Thousands of people vote for prohibition because they honestly believe it to be a good thing, but they are not willing to bear the expense of the enforcement of the law, or to do their share as citizens to assist in its enforcement. Yet the best devised prohibitory law will be an utter failure unless it is rigidly enforced. We do not mean that it must be so enforced that no liquor will be sold in the community. Men will violate any law. The fact that death is the punishment for murder has not wholly restrained people from killing their neighbors, and the penalties imposed upon those who violate prohibitory legislation will never be sufficient to deter everyone from violation of the law. At the same time, the sale of liquor openly can be stopped, and the surreptitious sale can be kept down to a minimum. To do this will cost money and give the authorities a great deal of trouble; but it can be done. In spite of all that is said to the contrary, the Maine law is enforced in the smaller towns and the rural districts of Maine, and in some parts of Eastern Canada the Scott Act has been a success. If the proposed Manitoba prohibitory law is determined to be constitutional, it can be enforced, but the enforcement will call for great vigilance and considerable expense. That such a law properly enforced will do much good cannot be successfully denied.

LAW AND LIBERTY.

There can be no liberty without law. David in one of his Psalms speaks of walking at liberty, and he argues that he does so because he is under the law of God. Let us look at the philosophical side of the matter and see if there is in the opening statement of this article the paradox that seems at first sight to be present. By law we do not mean statute law, although the principle applies to this within limits. The reference is to the fundamental laws of human action—what may be called the divine law.

If we grant the existence of an intelligent Creator, who has made laws for the Universe which He has called into being, it follows logically that things which conform to those laws are intrinsically right and those which are opposed to them are intrinsically wrong. Christ gave us the touchstone whereby we can test the character of our acts. We are to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us. This is an all sufficient rule. Let us apply it in a concrete case. Experience shows us that the best development of mankind takes place within the well-ordered family circle. That relation between men and women, which makes the ideal home possible, is, therefore, intrinsically right, and anything which antagonizes this relation must be intrinsically wrong. Surely no one need be told that the Golden Rule, honestly acted on, will do more than anything else that can be suggested to establish and maintain the home in all its strength and purity. We think no argument is necessary to show the existence and test of laws for the guidance of human action further than what follows from this illustration.

These laws are not restraints on liberty. They render liberty possible. Freedom of action is possible only when we move with the current of universal law. If by some freak of nature a thing could be endowed with the faculty of being always in antagonism to the law of gravity, it would be idle to say it had freedom of action. The perfectly running piece of machinery has freedom of action because it is fulfilling the purpose of its being. If through any accident it moves contrary to this purpose, the result is not freedom, but destruction. So men, when they are fulfilling the law of their being, are free. If they depart from that law, they lose their liberty and end in ruin.

We would like to impress this thought upon the minds of young readers, namely, that the only true freedom of action is in the direction of what is right. The man who gives himself up to excess is not free, even though he boasts that he has thrown off restraint. He has become a slave to that of which he should be the master. With the consciousness of having done right there is a sense of freedom which cannot exist side by side with the knowledge of wrong-doing. It is true in business, in politics and in every social relation, that the only man who can claim and feel a sense of true freedom is he who can honestly say he has done what is right. That is what is meant by "walking before the law, being at liberty." The Magna Charta of life is a good conscience.

THE CHINESE SITUATION.

The condition of things in China is serious in the extreme. It will be impossible for Germany to allow the murder of her minister to pass without taking prompt steps to obtain satisfaction, and the destruction of the other foreign legations is only less serious than this. Matters are approaching such a condition that, as the London spectator says, "no one can foresee the end." Nor are the troubles confined to the vicinity of Pekin, for riots have broken out along the West River, which is in the southern part of the empire.

The great danger is that the entente, which apparently exists between the powers, may be broken, and if so, confusion worse confounded will prevail. Already it is intimated that Russia knows more about the origin of the existing troubles than has been disclosed. If that power throws off the mask and undertakes to defend the Chinese government from the disciplining, which the other powers will now feel obliged to impose, there will be trouble on a very large scale.

The London papers count upon the co-operation of the United States with Japan and Great Britain. We venture to think that Germany would also be found ready to make a fourth party in such an alliance, if the powers are likely to become divided over the course to be followed. All this is, however, mere matter of speculation. Events have not yet ripened sufficiently to enable any one to determine what the issue will be of the present tension, not to speak of what will follow it.

Lord Roberts uses very little wine, never smokes, and is a modestly pious man. He is a plain liver and very unassuming. If he has one hobby it is his desire to promote temperance in the army.

Does it not seem rather extraordinary that a presumably intelligent paper like the Seattle Times should swallow that Boer story about the re-occupation of Bloemfontein by Steyn, and comment upon it?

The Montana Democratic convention has expressed approval of W. A. Clark's efforts to prevent the debasement of politics in that state. There is no doubt that Mr. Clark has done more than any man to keep up the price of votes.

It is a little odd that the only fighting that has been done so far in China by any of the European powers has been done by our men. The great military nations do not seem to be over active in getting where there are bullets flying.

President Mellen, of the Northern Pacific, estimates that there will be a reduction in the crop of the Northwestern States and Manitoba of some 10 or 12 per cent., as compared with last year. President Hill, of the Great Northern, puts the reduction at 15 per cent.

The Portland Telegram estimates the gold output of the Canadian Northwest and Alaska at $50,000,000 this year. This is a very large sum, and it is interesting to note that everything, almost, consumed in producing it must be carried North.

The Colonist's stand against any interference from Ottawa with the local affairs of British Columbia met with general approval yesterday. It must always be borne in mind that within its jurisdiction the provincial legislature is supreme and absolutely free from the dictation of any other body in the Empire.

The people at Ottawa might take a leaf out of British Columbia's book with advantage. We have certainly had a very lively fight here; but the absence of offensive personalities has been remarkable. Certainly none of the prominent workers or candidates indulged in them, and the press did not deal in them at all.

The Rossland Miner wants "an administration which will legislate in the interests of the whole country, and the members of which have neither private ends nor public ambitions to serve." We agree with our contemporary about the undesirability of ministers having no private ends to serve, but can hardly join with it in its views about public ambitions. On the contrary, we are not sure that a little public ambition is not a very excellent thing in a minister.

Mrs. William Ewart Gladstone did not long survive her distinguished husband. She passed to rest yesterday at the ripe age of 88. If her husband's life had been prolonged until the present he would be 91. He died two years ago. Mrs. Gladstone was not in public life in any way. She was the wife of a public man. Doubtless her influence was great, but it was never obtrusively exercised. She was a fine type of the British mother.

"Seattle and the Orient" is the title of an interesting illustrated book issued as a souvenir by the Seattle Times. It is beautifully got up and replete with interesting matter. The Times offers it for sale at the nominal price of 25 cents per copy.

The Chicago Record thinks it probable that flour from the United States may at an early day be imported into Great Britain in such large quantities that the mills of that country will have to close. The reason given is that American methods of milling are far ahead of those followed in Europe in point of economy.

From all accounts the revolution now in progress in the United States of Colombia is likely to assume larger proportions than such affairs usually do. Both the insurgents and the regular forces are armed with modern weapons, and possibly some very lively fighting may take place before peace is restored. The government army numbers 75,000 men.

Reports from Dawson say that there is quite a rush of miners to Kuyakuk. The Kuyakuk is one of the largest tributaries of the Yukon. It is wholly in Alaska. Its source is not far from the Arctic ocean. It joins the Yukon about 400 miles from the sea. Gold was discovered on its headwaters about two years ago, but up to the present not very much has been done in the way of mining.

The Seattle people are congratulating themselves upon the perfecting of arrangements whereby all kinds of United States mail will now be carried through the Canadian Yukon to interior Alaska points. And yet these same people a year or so ago were shouting out that there was nothing Canada could give them in the way of privileges in the Yukon that was worth a moment's consideration.

Great Britain, Germany, France, Spain, Belgium, Italy and Portugal have reached an agreement for the protection of wild animals in Africa. The protected zone extends from one side of the continent to the other, and from the latitude of the Zambesi to the 20th degree of north latitude. The agreement is very elaborate, but in a general way it may be said to provide for the safety of young animals, the barring of wholesale methods of slaughter and the destruction of crocodiles, pythons and poisonous serpents. The agreement stands for fifteen years.

Many rumors have been recently in circulation in regard to the Queen's eyesight, the statement being made that she was nearly blind. London Truth, referring to these stories, says that her eyes are quite as good as is ordinarily the case with people of her age. She has been advised to be very careful of their use, and especially not to tax them by artificial light, but there is no ground whatever for the idea that she is in danger of becoming blind.

The reports so far received of the condition of navigation in Behring sea are not calculated to encourage those who regard the ocean route as the best way to reach the Nome gold fields. Not only is there always likely to be great delay in getting into the sea because of the ice, but the element of danger is very serious. Steamers may be caught in the ice and be destroyed far from land, for Behring sea is a great expanse. The only safe way of reaching the gold fields of the North is via the Canadian Yukon. The Colonist has always made this contention, and has advanced it as a reason why Canada, in its dealings with the United States in regard to questions affecting Northern transportation, really held the whip hand.

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A FISHERY PATROL.

The Quadra Will Protect the Interests of the Canners and Watch For Poachers.

During the cruise North on which she has just left, the D. G. S. Quadra is to make the first extended and systematic patrol that has yet been attempted in connection with the British Columbia fisheries. It will be remembered that last season the Northern canners experienced considerable difficulty with their fishermen and other employees, who, as there were no resident representatives of law and authority, had matters very much their own way. At the same time illegal fishing and poaching were common, preventive authority again being missed.

This spring the canners (the British Columbia Cannery Co. acting as spokesmen) petitioned the Dominion government to despatch a revenue cutter North, with power to remain throughout the season, and by her presence prevent a recurrence of disorders or any violation of the regulations that the government in its wisdom has prepared for the protection of the industry.

The department decided to accede to this request, and Commander Walbran received instructions from Ottawa to proceed North immediately and patrol the coast so long as he may regard it as necessary. No special instances of wrong-doing as yet committed occasion this step, the plan being to have the Quadra on hand where she is most needed, and thereby avert lawlessness of every kind and degree.

The fishing was to have commenced on the 10th instant on the Skeena, and about the 1st of July at Rivers Inlet, which place the Quadra will visit shortly after that date. She will during her stay in the North keep closely in touch with all the Northern fishing waters, the Skeena more particularly, preserving peace and order, seeing that proper nets are used, enforcing the general regulations—and incidentally, perhaps, giving these, devoting themselves chiefly to outa little attention to the American halibut poachers, of whose operations complaints have frequently been made, although side waters, will require special cruising and attention.

The Quadra is expected to be away at least four or five weeks, and on her way North will take material and arrange for the construction of annexes to the lighthouses at Pointer Island, Dryad Point and Ivory Island. According to the views of many of the water-front community, the Quadra's present trip illustrates the urgent necessity for a second government steamer to specially care for the fishery interests. In order to take up this service the Quadra is of course forced to abandon for the time her regular lighthouse and buoy work, of which there is much to do.

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