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Our Agricultural Interests.

The report of the proceedings of a large and influential gathering of farmers and others interested in agricultural lands, will be read with interest. As a matter of course, great diversity of opinion was expressed, but the speeches in the main were good, and, despite some lofty flights of imagination on the part of two or three, quite edifying. The question of speculators and absentees being allowed to hold land which they neglect to cultivate or improve, and which is enhanced in value by the enterprise and industry of parties who own adjacent tracts, was very fairly put before the meeting by Dr. Davie, who, however, failed to suggest a remedy. The remedy, however, was supplied by Messrs Pemberton and Cochrane, who suggested a tax of so much per acre on wild land. Both gentlemen expressed themselves in favor of encouraging speculators to come and invest, instead of driving them away—an expression that will, we believe, be heartily re-echoed by all. The Cowichan Indian Reserve question was also introduced by Dr. Davie. This is a standing grievance with the settlers in that district, and Mr. Garrett showed that at least 3450 acres of the 3500 acres set apart for their use lies idle. Mr. Pidwell excepted to all this attention being paid to the Reserve while there are so many thousands of acres all around it lying unimproved. The trouble, however, seems to be that while the reserve is clear by nature, the other land requires clearing by manual labor to reduce it to a state fit for cultivation. Everybody knows that settlers in a new country are seldom overburdened with cash. Now, suppose that instead of his having to go to the great expense of clearing the land, a farmer could settle upon the reserve already cleared: Surely he would be enabled to raise rich crops in less than one-third of the time that would be consumed under other circumstances. He would thus be benefited directly and the country indirectly by the faculty afforded him. What is the case now? The land, some of it the finest on the coast, is lying unimproved because of a false notion of philanthropy that has seized upon our rulers. The legal right of the savages to the reserve should be preserved; but as for expending mawkish sympathy in their behalf, that should be left for the pseudo philanthropists of other countries, whose knowledge of Indian character does not extend beyond that derived from a perusal of Fenimore Cooper's novels, or Capt. Mayne Reid's adventures in the wilds of America. Even by our practical people, altogether too much sympathy has been wasted on these redskins. Allot them five hundred acres—a liberal allowance—and sell the remaining three thousand acres to white men, who will improve and cultivate the soil. What shall be done with the proceeds, is a question for the Crown, not for the Colony to decide. The propriety of imposing a duty on produce having been broached, Mr. Cochrane and Mr. Pemberton said they would only protect products of the soil, and would leave general merchandise to enter the Colony untrammelled; while Mr. Pidwell—a dyed-in-the-wool Protectionist—would tax everything that can be manufactured here. Mr. Fell took up the cudgels for the Free Port, and showed the farmers that if they would become great and prosperous, they must aim to build up cities on the Island that would furnish them markets for their produce; by the decline of Victoria or Nanaimo, their only markets would be closed, and what could they hope to export? The meeting, which was one of the most interesting and respectable we have attended on the Island, broke up after a few remarks from the chairman on the necessity of the farmers organizing for mutual protection. It is to be hoped that the Committee who have been appointed to lay the matter before the Executive, will hit upon some plan whereby a mutual un-

derstanding may be arrived at between those representing Town and Country interests, and an end be put forever to the agitation on fiscal questions that has proved so damaging to the best interests of the Colony.

The Country Lands and Agricultural Interests. A large and influential meeting of Agriculturalists and others interested in country lands, was held yesterday at the rooms of the Mechanical Institute. Among those present we noticed the following: Messrs E. G. Alston, K. McKenzie, Dr. Davie, Rev. A. C. Garrett, Mr. Cochrane, M. L. A., Mr. C. A. Bayley, Mr. Geo. Deans, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Thompson, Mr. King, Mr. Stephens, Mr. J. D. Pemberton, Mr. Nias, Mr. John Tod, Mr. Bates, Mr. Weir, senior, Mr. Selleck, Mr. Mansell, Mr. Tuite, Mr. Schmidt, Mr. D. M. Lang, Mr. J. Nicholson, K. McKenzie, of Swan Lake, was called to the chair and E. G. Alston rose and addressed the meeting. He said he had been struck with a statement in the Colonist and Chronicle that \$666,000 was sent last year out of the Colony for articles we could raise ourselves; already this year, for the first six months, \$302,535 had been sent out for similar articles, and if we went on at this rate for the balance of the year, \$605,060 would have been sent away. The meeting had assembled for a little wholesome discussion. The Colony had been surfeited with politics (hear, hear), but the agricultural interests had been allowed to suffer. If we had kept the money in the country we should have been much better off to-day. It was wrong to attribute the present depression to the Government or the House of Assembly—we should rather abuse ourselves for having remained so long inactive. Whether we have Union or whether we have not, it remained to be seen if we could do some good for ourselves. (Applause.) Dr. Davie rose to move the first resolution. He was greatly encouraged by the number present, and said it was impossible to look around without seeing the necessity that some vigorous action must be taken. Every cent that had come to us had been paid out. Capital from abroad had been spent in digging gold, and the gold had been paid to people who lived in another land. There was good land everywhere on this island, but it was locked up, and in order to open it to agricultural purposes, it must be in the hands of practical men—men who would cultivate it. A great deal of the best land was reserved for Indian and Government purposes. What do the Indians at Cowichan do with the 3500 acres of land? They don't cultivate 30 acres. A great deal of the land near Victoria was in the hands of speculators who had never produced a grain of corn, and who would only sell at an enormous advance. A tax should be imposed on these wild lands, to make the holders bring them into market or cultivate them. At the next election not a member should be returned who would not pledge himself to a law to take these lands out of the hands of speculators. (Applause.) The doctor read the resolution, which was as follows: That in view of the fact that many thousand dollars are every year sent out of the Colony for the purchase of articles of consumption which might be produced at home, it is incumbent upon us to make every exertion to retain this money in the Colony. J. D. Pemberton seconded the resolution. American produce deluged the market and a system should be introduced that would shut out produce grown on American soil and encourage American farmers to come here and settle; he did not think that taxation of wild lands would result in good, and a tax on absentees would be most prejudicial; the Real Estate Tax Act was at the bottom of the trouble; it should be abolished and a land tax, taxing all land about Victoria so much per acre would have the effect of throwing the land into the market; this would not apply to land at a distance from the town, but a zoning law should be introduced, whereby holders would be compelled to join in the expense of building fences. We should not give out that we did not wish speculators here—he wished they would come in shiploads [Laughter]. Mr. Pemberton alluded to the advantages that American farmers possessed over Vancouver farmers by having water communication with Victoria. He favored an extension of the landing permit system to every article we could produce here—lumber included. He blamed the Legislative Council for the present state of things. Mr. Cochrane, M. L. A., said that the attention of the country should be turned seriously to agricultural matters. Gold had its work to perform, but the want of encouragement to the farmer prevented this island from being in a position to supply itself with export produce. Roads were wanted badly (hear) and until the farmer had the means of bringing his produce into market with facility, he could not compete with produce from the other side. There must be protective duties on every article that we can raise [Applause]. On European goods he believed there should be no duty, but on agricultural products he would levy a heavy one; a tax on speculators would be unwise. He would be glad to see plenty of them coming, and so long as we could make use of them we should not look upon them or absentees as enemies. Land should be taxed per acre, not as to value. [Hear]. By the present system, the man who improved his land was taxed five times as much as the man who did not improve (applause). He deprecated the real estate tax as unjust and sat down amid much applause. The resolution as read was carried unanimously. W. J. Macdonald proposed the second resolution, which read as follows: That in order to promote a more extensive occupation of land, all the lands of the Colony, whether mineral or agricultural, and also a large portion of the Indian Reserves, should be thrown open for occupation and settlement, on conditions of improving the same. Mr. Macdonald said there would be no trouble in throwing open the Crown and mineral lands, but there would be difficulty experienced in

dealing with the Indians for their reserves, as they had very exalted ideas of the value of their real estate. [Hear]. It would be unjust to place a special tax on land held by speculators. It would be quite enough if they paid a tax equal to that paid by the man who improved his land. [Hear]. This would throw the lands into the market and would be dealing justly with all. Mr. George Deans seconded the resolution. Dr. Ash, M. L. A., thought it would be an act of injustice to take the lands away from the Indians without compensation; but they should be put up at auction, and the money accruing from the sale be paid the Indians or accorded for their benefit. [Applause]. He would suggest this plan to the Government. Rev. A. C. Garrett said that only about 50 acres of the 3500 acres belonging to the Indians were under cultivation, and that 500 acres was all that the Indians required for a Reserve. The Indians were promised by the Crown protection in the possession of their village-sites and cultivated lands. To take their lands away from them now, would lead to bloodshed. But while the lands belonged to the Indians they had never been conceded the right to sell the land, or dispose of them in any way. He therefore thought that the lands should be placed in such a condition as to produce a revenue which could be devoted to the amelioration of the natives. The Governor was no doubt anxious to assist and to throw open the lands, but could not get justified in taking any step while the Crown Lands question was in its present state. He (Mr. Garrett) believed that were a petition or plan submitted to His Excellency by such a respectable meeting as this, that it would receive immediate attention. Mr. Pidwell, M. L. A., thought the Cowichan Indian Reserve was a piece of land that would be wanted some day to support the Island. There were thousands of other acres in Cowichan Valley that might be made bright and smiling farms, if the settlers would only go to work with half the energy their fathers had shown in the other Provinces. When he and other land-holders bought at Cowichan, they understood that the money they paid would be devoted towards quieting the Indian titles, which had not been done. The land was worth some \$40,000 and he had no idea of seeing it handed over in fee simple to the Indians. Mr. Nias made a few sensible remarks in favor of putting a special tax on speculators. The second resolution was carried unanimously. Mr. Stuart proposed the 3d resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Pidwell, and read as follows: That His Excellency the Governor be respectfully requested to afford the following information, viz: 1. The number of acres in the Colony sold as well as pre-empted. 2. The number of acres under cultivation. 3. The quantity of available farming land, coal fields, &c., unsold or unoccupied. 4. The quantity of land in the possession of Indians, together with the corresponding population of each reserve. Mr. Nias proposed the 4th resolution, as follows: That a committee be appointed to wait upon His Excellency the Governor in order to press these matters and the views of this meeting on his favorable consideration. Mr. Heistermann seconded, and the resolution was carried. Rev. Mr. Garrett moved the fifth resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Pidwell in a short speech in favor of protection for the farmer. There was a large tract of land here unutilized, which was taxed at the same rate as cultivated land at Craigflower. Agricultural countries were the richest in the world, and it was a libel to say that there was no land here worth cultivating. He favored the imposition of a tariff on manufactured goods. The resolution was carried, and read as follows: That a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to Nanaimo and the outlying districts of the Colony, and the co-operation of the inhabitants invited thereon. Mr. Pemberton moved the following: That this Colony having through their representatives in the House of Assembly, recommended an extension of the permit system, with a view to protect home industries and so encourage settlement, His Excellency be respectfully requested to consider whether it would not be possible to obtain a reconsideration of the subject by the Legislature during the present session. Mr. Pidwell said the Legislative Council had the great constitutional right to express its opinion as the House of Assembly had, and he deprecated any such reflection upon the members. Mr. Nias said the Legislative Council had been a curse to the country. (Laughter.) Mr. Pidwell rose to a point of order. Mr. Nias—There is no order about it. (Laughter.) The Council has been a curse to the country. (Laughter.) Gentlemen holding official positions may laugh, but it is a serious matter for men who have invested their funds and brought their families here. Mr. Fell said that if the object of the meeting was to get a Tariff (Voices—No, no. Then why pass such a resolution as that offered? This was a meeting to throw open the lands to settlement, and why introduce politics? The expenses of Government should be reduced instead of taxes being increased. Farmers would not be benefited by Protection. They say that the farmers of Washington Territory can compete with them. More shame to them. The Americans have heavier taxes to pay than we, and yet we cannot compete with them. Open your coal and mineral resources; get markets like Nanaimo and Victoria; and you will be prosperous. Mr. Garrett—Where are the towns to come from? Mr. Fell explained that wherever mineral resources were opened prosperous communities invariably sprung up. The resolution was subsequently amended to omit reference to the Legislative Council, and was passed. The chair appointed Messrs Pemberton, Davie, Macdonald, Thompson, and Garrett as a Committee to present an address to His Excellency. The chairman was added to the Committee. A vote of thanks having been extended the chairman, Mr. McKenzie rose and said that

the time had at last arrived when steps must be taken to ameliorate the condition of the agriculturalist. Free Port had been given a fair trial and it had done nothing for the farmer. Now if they organized they could carry measures that would protect them from foreign competition. (Applause.) Rev. Mr. Garrett called attention to the fact that there was no agricultural society exhibition this year. Mr. McKenzie attributed the absence of an exhibition to the want of funds. Mr. Beggs suggested that a Farmer's Club be formed, and the Committee were instructed to take the suggestion into consideration. The meeting then adjourned sine die. LOCAL INTELLIGENCE. Thursday, August 16. D. T.—John Duscombe, an elderly and respectable looking man, who is said to have been better days, was brought before Mr. Pemberton yesterday, charged by officer McAdam with having stolen from the clothing store of Messrs. Wilson & Co. of Government street, a coat of the value of \$4 50. Mr. Joseph Wilson stated that from information received from Mr. J. H. Brown he followed the accused and found the coat produced in his possession. Mr. Brown deposed that he was standing at his door on Tuesday afternoon, when he saw the accused deliberately take the coat off a peg and go away with it. Inspector Welch said the accused had resided here some time; was an industrious man, and had kept a parcels delivery and express wagon, and was now the holder of the Bush Tavern license. Mr. Wilson said that seeing the condition the accused was in he did not wish to prosecute. The Magistrate regretted that a man who had borne a respectable character should be placed in such a position, but as the accused was suffering from delirium tremens and not in a fit condition to be discharged; he should remand him for three days. FROM THE NORTH-WEST COAST.—The Telegraph steamer Mumford, Captain T. Coffin, arrived last night via New Westminster from the North. She ascended the Skeena River two or three times, having gone up a distance of 110 miles, but found the navigation very tortuous and difficult. All the freight was safely landed and Capt. Butler and his party with Indians and canoes took it up to the point where Mr. Conway announced by letter that he expected to arrive on the 10th inst. The weather was very pleasant throughout the trip. She will return to the Skeena in a few days. A MOTION FOR A NEW TRIAL in the case of Bunster v. Joseph Bros., was made in the Supreme Court yesterday, and gave rise to quite a "scene" between Mr. Ring and Mr. McCraith, counsel for the defendants. Mr. Ring insisted that as senior counsel he had a right to lead in the argument, a right which Mr. McCraith denied. The "scene" ended in the withdrawal of Mr. Ring from the Court. THE ELOPEMENT.—It was a married woman and not a maid, who disappeared about the time of the sailing of the Fideliter. The husband of the woman is a gardener. She has three children—one of which she has left with her lord; the other two she has taken away. It is now believed that she is secreted in a house near town, and a certain locality is very closely watched. CHURCH OF ENGLAND AT ESQUIMALT.—The corner stone of the new Church at Esquimalt will be laid by Mrs. Denman, on Thursday, August 30th. The site, which was presented by Mr. Donald Fraser, is prettily situated on the south side of the main road. About \$1600 has been already subscribed, and at least one thousand more are still required. FUNERAL.—The remains of the late Mrs. Todd were followed to the grave yesterday afternoon by a large number of friends, and also by the scholars of the Wesleyan Sunday School. Superintendent Waddington caused the pupils of the common schools to be dismissed, to enable such as felt disposed to join the mournful procession. ARRIVAL.—The bark Jeddo, Capt. Gray, 14 days from San Francisco, consigned to Pickett & Co., arrived yesterday morning in the outer harbour, and sailed for Burrard Inlet—where she will load with lumber for the Australian market—in the afternoon. EXPLORATIONS.—Judge Darwin did not accompany Mr. Coleman on his second attempt to ascend Mount Baker; but started on Tuesday last, accompanied by Dr. Calhoun and brother, to explore the Olympic range of mountains west of Port Angeles. Mr. Coleman and party have started from Bellingham Bay for Mount Baker. FROM SAN FRANCISCO.—The bark Rival, Capt. Blair, arrived yesterday from the Bay City, after a lengthy passage of 20 days, occasioned by adverse winds. She brings a miscellaneous cargo, consigned to Messrs. Pickett & Co., and is discharging at the Hudson Bay Company's wharf. THE U. S. STEAMER LINCOLN arrived yesterday from Puget Sound, and will proceed to-morrow to New Westminster.

THE SUPPLY BILL.—It will be seen, by the report of yesterday's proceedings in the House, that the Appropriation Bill applying the sum of \$244,362 32, to the service of the year, has been finally passed. None of the city members were present, for what reason, deponent sayeth not. BIG CROPS.—As high as sixty bushels of wheat will be harvested from a single acre of wheat at Cowichan this season. On the farm of the Messrs. Fleming the wheat is six feet high. THE H. B. Co.'s STEAMER OTTER was seen by the steamer Mumford going into Fort Rupert on Sunday last, on her return to Victoria. FETE NAPOLEON.—The French residents yesterday hoisted the tri-color in honor of Napoleon's birthday. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.—This body will meet at 2 o'clock on Friday afternoon, to consider Governor Seymour's despatches. Ireland Dublin, June 8.—One of the most disastrous fires that has taken place in Dublin for a long time broke out last evening in the house of Mr. James Delany, 19 and 20, Westmoreland-street. The house being a large one, the ground floor was divided into two shops No 19 being occupied by Mr. Williams, hatter, and No. 20, which joined the Ballast-office, being used as the tailoring establishment of Mr. Delany. The remainder of the house was occupied by Mr. Delany and his family as a residence. His shop was closed as usual at 7 o'clock last evening and Mr. Williams's at 8. There was nobody in the house when the fire was discovered but Mrs. Delany, Miss Delany and her two young sisters, Mr. A. Strahan, who happened to be paying a visit to the family, and a servant girl. Quite suddenly, at about 10 minutes to 9 o'clock, the street passengers observed the fire. The shutters were incautiously opened which gave new stimulus from the full supply of air thus afforded; fearful flames burst out into the street, and raged laterally and upwards with great fury. The woodwork of the entire house seemed like tinder. With a most extraordinary rapidity the flames seized on and consumed everything that was consumable in the shop and on the drawing-room floor, and were rapidly extending higher still. Several human forms, half obscured by the smoke, appeared at the middle window of the attic floor, shrieking loudly for assistance, when two fire-escapes were brought up, one from Nelson's Pillar, the other from Foster place. One of these was reared against the front of the house, and efforts were made to get it into position to be availed of by the poor creatures who were in such peril; but from some cause or other, most likely from the great pressure and swaying crowds difficulty was experienced in endeavouring to manage it. At this time one of the party who were in attic of the burning house, a man, appeared imploring assistance for his female companions. Mr. Charles Taylor, a gentleman who was passing when the fire attracted his attention, rushed up the fire-escape ladder to render assistance, a portion of the machinery gave way, and he was obliged to retire. He was followed by one of the men of the Fire Brigade, a brave fellow named Gilligan, who also made great efforts to reach the house but the fire-escape was found useless, and and, after undergoing considerable risk of falling on account of the condition it had got into, he came to the ground again. The other fire-escape was also found useless and the poor creatures perished. THE BEST REMEDY FOR INDIGESTION, &c. NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS. A RECOMMENDED as a simple but certain remedy for indigestion. They act as a powerful tonic and gentle aperient; are mild in their operation; safe under any circumstances; and thousands of persons can now bear testimony to the benefits derived from their use. Sold in bottles at 1s., 2s., 3s., and 11s. each, by Chemists, Druggists and Storekeepers in all parts of the World. *Orders to be made payable London Houses. de23 law Agent for Victoria, W. M. SEARBY, Chemist, Government street. de26-ly W DAY & MARTIN'S REAL JAPAN BLANKET. 97, HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON. For affording comfort and durability to the blanket it stands unrivalled. Sold by all First Class Houses in British Columbia and the Colonies! In Bottles and Tins at 6d., 1s. and 1s. 6d. each. CAUTION.—Do not take the opportunity of cautioning purchasers against spurious imitations of their MANUFACTURED LABELS. *Orders through Messrs. de26-ly

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