The Colonist.

The Colonist Printing & Publishing Company, Limited Liability
27 Broad Street, Victoria, B. C.
A. G. SARGISON, Managing Director.

THE SEMI-WEEKLY COLONIST

One year	$1 00
Six months	50
Three months	25

Sent postpaid to Canada, United Kingdom and United States.

RESPECTING THE SABBATH.

The Toronto Star does not reflect the extreme sectarian and sabbatarian views which prevail in Toronto and generally throughout Ontario. It has a commendably moderate and sane expression of editorial opinion on the subject of the proposed Sunday observance law. It is a view that ought to have great weight at Ottawa, and doubtless will have, because we may assume that the government there has not too much respect for the opinions of Ontario as popularly expressed.

The Star thinks that the Jews and the Seventh Day Adventists have strong ground when they argue that they have the same civil rights as their fellow citizens, and that if the law can be modified to suit their views, consistent with the rights of the majority to rule, it ought to be done. Of course, there is the infidel who does not believe in the observance of Sunday as Sabbath at all to consider, but this is a professedly Christian country and no one will question the right of the majority to make laws, that are not oppressive to the minority, in accordance with their views. The principle to be observed, from the religious point of view, and we may add from the humanitarian point of view is that there should be one day of rest. If the Jew and the Seventh Day Adventist conscientiously believe that it should be the seventh, instead of the first day of the week, he is entitled to keep that day, but not two days. Their observance, however, must be subject to the general observance. Says the Star:

> If stores conducted by Jews were kept open on Sunday for the transaction of business with the general public, that would interfere with the general observance of the day; but it is not so clear that the same danger would follow from allowing a Jew or an Adventist to work in his garden or field, or to mend a coat or a watch or a pair of shoes on that day.
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> We must recognize the fact that any Sunday observance law is a compromise. The law can provide only for a civil, not a religious observance of the day. Yet the first day of the week is chosen, because that is the day on which the great majority of the people, for religious reasons, refrain from labor. To that extent the religious aspect of the day is considered by the law; the law accommodates itself to the convenience of the greatest number. It protects them from employers who might force them to violate their consciences by working on Sunday. For them it is a measure for the preservation of religious liberty. It ought to be a measure of religious liberty also for Jews, for Seventh Day Adventists, and for those who regard all days as equally sacred, and labor as sacred as rest.
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> There has never been very much practical difficulty about Sunday observance in this province. Business is suspended, violations of the law do not go beyond an occasional sale of cigars or ice-cream on Sunday. In Toronto the street cars carry immense numbers of people to church, to the houses of friends or relatives, or to parks and other places of recreation. There are no baseball games or other paid amusements; the people don't want these, and will be quite satisfied to see them forbidden by law. They will also support strict laws for the protection of employees in their right to the day of rest.
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> Customs vary in different parts of Canada. In Winnipeg there are no Sunday cars, but the custom as to Sunday sales is much less strict than in Toronto. In the province of Quebec, and especially in Montreal, the people have became used to Sunday amusements that would not be tolerated in Ontario. The Montreal city council has unanimously adopted a resolution requesting the government "not to favor any legislation whose effect would be to prevent on Sunday the running of street cars and trains, excursions by boat or by railway, the opening of public parks, provided that no spirituous liquors be sold therein, and whose effect generally would tend to deprive the citizens of Montreal of the means of healthy and moral recreations." Archbishop Bruchesi has expressed himself as favorable to a stricter observance of the Lord's Day, but his views may be in advance of those of the Roman Catholic clergy and laity, and that seems to be indicated by the resolution adopted by the Montreal council.

With the foregoing we entirely agree in a general way. We should seek, whatever our views may be regarding a subject upon which there is such a wide divergence of opinion, to attain only the practical possible, and not the extreme limit of our contentions. We must remember that we have the feelings and convictions of every person else to consider, and, therefore, should occupy tenable ground. We do not want a continental Sabbath in this country. We want to avoid the recognition of a secular Sunday either in theory or practice But in attaining that end we must leave the freest exercise of moral responsibility on the part of each individual in respect to his own conduct. In other words, we must not seek to compel the religious observance of the day upon any person. Whether it be what is called the first or the seventh day we observe, is in our opinion wholly immaterial. The division of time is purely arbitrary, and we have no historical proof of continuity even if we were dead sure of all our fundamental facts. It would be just about as profitable to dispute, as they did of old, about the number of souls that could dance on the point of a needle, as to hope to reach a finality on the subject. All humanitarian and religious conditions are satisfied with the observance of one day in seven. There are, however, those who have conscientious scruples on the question and those we must respect.

WATER POWERS OF THE DOMINION.

The question of water powers has come up prominently for discussion in the Dominion House of Commons. It was brought up by Mr. Monek, local leader of the Conservatives in the province of Quebec, and had the promise of careful consideration of Premier Laurier and Hon. C. S. Hyman, minister of public works. It was conceded that Canada had more water power available for utilization in industry than any other country in the world; and that, therefore, a policy of conservation and development was of the utmost importance in the future. It has been suggested that the geological survey at Ottawa should take the matter in hand and after careful investigation of our resources in this respect make reports in a manner similar to the reports upon the mineral resources of the country. Of course, there is the question of jurisdiction to consider. The provinces evidently have the power to deal with all the phases of water power excepting when electricity is exported outside of their limits, when it comes within the jurisdiction of the Dominion. That is to say, the Dominion has to do with the regulation of the export. It is claimed that where a water power exists on a navigable river it belongs to the Dominion, but as a river cannot be said to be navigable where falls occur, it is doubtful whether the contention will hold. However, that does not in the least affect the question of the geological survey reporting on the water powers which exist, as a matter of information for the whole of the Dominion, and with the same object, in view as have the reports in connection with mineral deposits and mineral formations. It is most important that we have full information upon the subject. Under modern conditions, which make the production of electricity the main factor in industrial operations, it follows that the country with the greatest water power for that purpose must eventually become the greatest manufacturing country in the world. The Niagara Falls and the St. Lawrence river have great potentialities in power but these are only two out of hundreds of rivers, less in magnitude, it is true, but with immense driving power nevertheless. Don't let us forget that in British Columbia we have a considerable asset in water power.

THE RECENT SESSION.

We printed on Sunday an interview with Premier McBride in reference to the more important measures which were submitted and passed at the recent session of the legislature and to certain other matters which were freely and prominently discussed. These questions have been the subject of so much misrepresentation, both in the legislature and out of it in the press, that a formal and clear statement on the part of the Premier will be welcomed by those who desire to judge fairly of the merits of the political issues which have been raised as a consequence.

First of all he deals with the Kaien Island "scandal." This has been so exhaustively and, we believe, effectively dealt with in the columns of the Colonist that it is not necessary to dwell upon it here. Mr. McBride affirms the position strongly that the government negotiated directly with the Grand Trunk Pacific Company through properly constituted representatives, and that at no time and in no sense were intermediaries employed. He emphatically states that the transaction was a proper one throughout and in the best interests of the province. The leader of the opposition spent the greater part of the session taking evidence and skirmishing in the highways and byways for material, but utterly failed to connect the government with wrong-doing. Failing in that, he endeavored to foist upon the House a minority report which was based on "handpicked" testimony of witnesses and wholly unsupported by the facts of the case.

The Premier deals with the Columbia & Western and Midway & Vernon matters in the same forcible and clear manner. He points out, as the Colonist pointed out, that the questions involved in the two cases were quite different. In the one, the Columbia & Western had earned the subsidy according to the terms of the act, with the exception that the surveys, for reasons which were satisfactorily explained, had not been made within the time limit. The moral obligation involved depended not upon the surveying of the lands, but upon the construction of the line for the sections for which the lands had been granted. To have repudiated the liability upon the technicality of surveys and not upon the substantial performance of the contract itself, would have been repudiation in the worst sense of the term, and would have had serious results in unsettling confidence in the good faith of the government of the province. It was a question which had to be decided upon the merits of the case, and without reference to the extraneous issues imported into the discussion by the opposition. If there were other reasons for reflections on the government in connection with its relations with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, these stood upon their own bottom and did not affect the validity of a contract performed by itself. There were, however, no such reasons. Mr. McBride has happily placed his finger upon the weakness of the opposition armor in dealing with the Columbia & Western land grant when he stated that there was an appeal to popular prejudice against a corporation as a plea for evading an obligation to that corporation, a phase of public policy that can have no moral justification.

In the case of the Midway & Vernon, there was no contention that a contract had been substantially complied with. The issue in reality was whether technically the company was within its rights in claiming the subsidy as one that might be legally earned in the future—in other words, whether the time had not elapsed during which a commencement could be made in order to earn a subsidy. The government had no proof in its possession that the subsidy was still alive when active operations were begun, and none had been submitted. The government made known its position on the question from the very outset, holding that a reference to the courts was necessary to determine its obligation in the premises. The Chief Justice in his judgment in the case clearly justifies that position. The onus of proof was upon the company and not upon the province. The Midway & Vernon will in all probability be built, and every equity in the case will be satisfied. Regarding the two questions, the government was clearly right in not permitting the issue in one to depend upon the issue in the other. They were not related in any sense, and had to be settled each upon its merits; and the government has distinctly scored in its treatment of both.

With reference to the educational questions before the House, readers will observe that the Premier takes a no less certain position. The Education Act of 1905 was a distinct and radical departure from the system previously in vogue, but in line with previous less important departures from the old centralized system. It was wholly new and had to apply to unknown, or, at least, uncertain conditions in rural districts. That it should not meet all the requirements might have been expected, but it was on right lines and in its present amended form is proving highly satisfactory. The McGill University measure should have been wholly non-contentious, but it was opposed for opposition sake. Opposition in this instance was a slap in the face to laudable efforts to further higher education in British Columbia without expense or effort on the part of the people.

On the whole the Premier is to be congratulated upon his comprehensive defence of his administration and the policy of the government. In his leadership he has displayed neither lack of ability nor courage of his convictions, and we feel confident that the skilful performance of an extremely difficult task is adequately appreciated throughout the country.

JAMES J. HILL AND RECIPROCITY.

Mr. James J. Hill deplores the movement of capital and population from the United States to Canada. He says it must be stopped. His remedy for it is reciprocity between Canada and the United States. Though Jim Hill is Canadian-born, he is not a friend of Canada. He is more American than the Americans. He is not building railways for Canada's good. He is getting even with the C. P. R. and looking for business for his lines in the United States. If he could get reciprocity, that would increase the traffic which he could divert. It would mean more business for him. Mr. Hill is a wise man in his own interests—much wiser than many Canadians who stick up for him. He will help along the reciprocity movement. If necessary, he will contribute freely to the campaign. He will subsidize newspapers in Canada and control them for that purpose.

His policy of building branch lines into the Canadian West has certain incidental local benefits. They are more apparent than real. They are not permanent benefits. He has no workshops in Canada. His railway crews, as far as possible live in the United States. His railway buys no supplies in Canada. One result of the operations of his lines in the southern interior, while needed railway facilities have been furnished in advance and have assisted early development in that way, has been to limit the earning powers of the C. P. R. and reduce the payroll and expenditures of that company in Nelson, Rossland and in the Boundary. Jim Hill is building up towns on the other side of the line and assisting no industries on this side. It is not a policy calculated to build up Canada, and we shall discover sooner or later that the larger his operations in this country the less there is left for our own people.

We want more railways, and we want competition, but those railways and that competition should come from our own railway companies. With the C. P. R., the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific in the West, we should be able to look after our own traffic. If they cannot handle it, let us build other lines. Let the Dominion government study the position in British Columbia and apply itself to the problem of communication. We should not be at the mercy of American lines in developing this country. With the exception of the Crow's Nest Pass railway, which came as the result of agitation of eastern wholesale men for more direct communication with the Kootenay market, no important railway enterprise in this province has been assisted. It is true the Grand Trunk Pacific has been very liberally aided to build through the mountains, but as a transcontinental line it was bound in time to come through to the coast; but even then the one opportunity by which British Columbia could reap the greatest benefits from that enterprise—the building from the coast east—was deliberately ignored. In other words, when the road is built—and construction has been delayed as long as possible—British Columbia derives the minimum of benefit from construction.

Above all the other provinces, owing to its peculiar physical conditions, this province demands railway building for its development. Railways must be built well in advance—at largely increased cost—before traffic is created. Throughout a vast interior nothing can move without a railway being not only in sight, but actually built and running. In the older provinces it is difficult to find a place to build a railway that is badly needed. In the Northwest provinces the railways cannot move fast enough to keep up with the traffic already awaiting them. In British Columbia alone is railway building a problem. The capitalist avoids a situation where a railway must be built in order to create traffic, and will not take the risk without some substantial inducement. The example of James J. Hill is held up as a railway magnate who builds railways without bonuses, but we forget that he strikes the province at the easy places, where traffic has already been created by the efforts of others—at Fernie, at Kootenay Lake, at Grand Forks, Phoenix, at Midway, and so on. To secure this happy result from which Canadian railways are practically debarred he has to bob in and out along the boundary line, accommodating himself to the topography of the country and in competition with railways constructed at three times the cost.

When shall we see Mr. Hill undertake to build the Vancouver, New Westminster and Yukon without government assistance? Not at least until other railways have blazed the way for him. When Mr. Tarte resigned from the government at Ottawa on account of Jim Hill's proposed invasion of the West, he foresaw a danger which his colleagues did not realize or did not care to see.

FISHERIES REPORT FOR 1904.

It is now well on in 1906, and we have only just received the statistical report of the fisheries for 1904. Surely an improvement could be made on this. The department of mines of British Columbia has sometimes been severely criticized because it does not get out its report sooner than four months after the first of the year. In this case it is over fourteen months, and the information so far as British Columbia is concerned is ancient history. In fact, most persons have forgotten what happened in 1904, it seems so long ago. However, a few figures will be interesting, even at this date.

The total value of the fish caught and fish products in Canada for 1904 was $23,516,000, the largest with the exception of 1901, when the phenomenal salmon run in British Columbia swelled the total beyond $25,000,000, in the history of Canada. Of this total, British Columbia, next to Nova Scotia, is the largest contributor, the figures showing as follows:

Nova Scotia	$7,287,099
British Columbia	5,219,107
New Brunswick	4,671,084
Ontario	1,793,229
Quebec	1,751,397
Manitoba and N. W. T.	1,716,977
Prince Edward Island	1,077,546
Total	$23,516,439
Net increase	414,561

The following statement shows the values of the principal commercial fish (above $100,000) for the year 1904:

Salmon	$3,869,545
Lobsters	3,691,151
Cod	3,643,654
Herring	2,156,489
Whitefish	1,058,812
Sardines	790,441
Halibut	784,564
Trout	782,140
Mackerel	750,397
Haddock	638,973
Pickerel	638,567
Smelts	447,579
Hake	363,134
Pike	252,853
Sturgeon	241,710
Pollock	235,818
Clams	215,338
Oysters	186,685
Alewives	155,616
Eels	129,944

From the year 1869 to 1904, both inclusive, the five principal food-fishes have yielded the following large values:

Cod	$132,622,167
Salmon	81,943,517
Lobsters	75,961628
Herring	70,262,084
Mackerel	45,089,021

The fishing industry gives employment to an army of workers. During 1904 no less than 77,345 men were engaged in the Canadian fisheries, not including the numerous employees in the lobster industry. These fishermen used 6,393,383 fathoms of gill nets and seines, besides other fishing gear and fixtures, aggregating a capital of $12,356,942 invested in the whole fisheries of the Dominion. This amount shows an advance of $100,000 over the invested capital of the previous season.

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE FINANCES.

Col. Matheson, provincial treasurer of Ontario, has made arrangements to float a $6,000,000 loan for the Temiskaming line of railway at 98½. Immediately the details were announced, the Globe began wildly to exclaim "Stop the loan." It contended that the government should not go to Great Britain for the money and should raise the loan in the province—a good policy, if practicable. The opposition in the House for several days pounded the government on the deal. Mr. Ross, late premier, contended that the loan would only net 96 and was "a bad bargain."

Col. Matheson stood the criticism for a time and then opened his guns, by making a statement which brought confusion and defeat to his enemies. The opposition had dug pits for the government and then walked straight into them. It appears that when Col. Matheson went to England in connection with the loan he found that his predecessor had been there in 1904, while in office. "He dealt," says the Mail and Empire, "with Coates & Co., the eminent London bankers. First he raised a temporary loan running for six months. For this he bound the province to pay 4 per cent., although the bank rate at that time was but 3 per cent. This involved us in a heavy loss. Then he agreed that the sale of the bonds to cover the temporary loan should be entrusted to Coates & Co. A definite contract—so far as the late government could make it a contract—was entered into under which the bonds must be floated in London and Coates & Co. must do the flotation. When Col. Matheson went to London to negotiate for the permanent loan, he was confronted with the bargain into which the late government had entered. The banking firm wanted to handle the securities for us. The treasurer, of course, enquired the terms, and was informed that the bonds would be floated at 96 less the commission, which made the net yield 93. This government would have nothing to do with such an offer. It took upon itself to repudiate the contract of the Ross government, and sold the bonds for 98½, which Mr. Ross says will bring us 96, after all expenses are paid. The action of the government saves us, according to the opposition figures, $180,000. Now, Coates & Co., holding that they have a legal claim, are seeking compensation for breach of the contract which the late government made."

The most remarkable feature about it was that, when confronted with the bargain in the House, Mr. Ross, leader of the opposition, who was premier when it was made, stated that he knew nothing about it. Either, then, Mr. Harcourt, his provincial treasurer, entered into an arrangement to dispose of a $6,000,000 loan about which he did not tell his colleagues, or Mr. Ross was practicing duplicity upon the House. Assuming that he did not know of the deal, his being kept in ignorance is beyond comprehension. Assuming that he did know, he was condemning the government for making a better bargain than the Ross government did by 3 per cent., and for not floating the loan in Canada when by his own act he bound the province to go to London to deal with a particular firm. Now, we can just imagine the state of frenzy of the opposition in British Columbia if they could show up such methods of finance on the part of the McBride administration. Mr. Oliver would absolutely explode in his oratorical efforts to do justice to the situation.

TRADE WITH THE ISLANDS.

The following is taken from the Vancouver Province:

"The settlers on Salt Spring, Pender and Mayne Islands desire steamship connection with Vancouver, and in a letter received today by His Worship Acting Mayor Bethune it was declared that the islanders are not tied up to Victoria. Mr. Washington Grimmer, in a letter to the mayor, stated that the settlers had reached the conclusion that a good trade could be done between this city and the islands provided steamship connection could be secured. It was suggested by Mr. Grimmer that the steamer which makes a weekly connection between Vancouver and Ladysmith might make calls at the islands.

"The settlers have livestock and general farm and garden produce to sell, and they believe the Vancouver market better than that of Victoria."

While talking of Hundred Thousand Clubs, do not let us forget opportunities within our grasp. The above is a subject for the Board of Trade of Victoria to carefully consider. Communication should be had with the people of the islands to find out what their wants are and how best their requirements may be dealt with.

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Births, Marriages, Deaths

DIED

REV. MOTHER MARY AGATHA—At St. Ann's convent, Lachine, Quebec., on the 9th instant, the Rev. Mother Mary Agatha (nee Mary Hand), the only and dearly beloved sister of Mrs. Jennie Fitzgerald, of Carmanah, B. C. (Montreal, New York and Boston newspapers please copy.)

BYERS—At the family residence, Toronto St., on the 9th inst., Emma, beloved wife of Capt. W. D. Byers, aged 31 years, and a native of San Francisco, Cal.

COLLIS—At the Provincial Royal Jubilee Hospital, on the 7th instant, Edmond C. Collis, a native of Pimlico, London, England; aged 60 years and 5 months.

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