The Weekly British Colonist.

Wednesday February 16 1870.

The Conditions.

Under the provisions of the British North America Act, 1867, Penitentiaries are placed in the list of Federal departments; and it will have been observed that a penitentiary is comprised in the programme submitted to Prince Edward Island. Although destitute of such an institution, the necessity for it has long been felt by the people of British Columbia; and the Legislature would not only be justified in including that amongst the conditions of union, but that body would be guilty of palpable dereliction of duty did it make such an omission. So much has already appeared in these columns anent the present disgraceful and pernicious system of dealing with criminals that it will scarcely be necessary to enlarge upon the subject in the present article. Upon several grounds we conceive the existing condition to be wholly unjustifiable. As the common receptacle of murderers, convicts, robbers, thieves, Indian whisky-sellers, drunkards, vagabonds, rogues, debtors and insane persons, our common prisons are notoriously unadapted. When we consider the impossibility of classification or of proper treatment, either physically, morally or religiously, when the chain-gang branch of the system is borne in mind, surely no one will suggest that a continuance of the present condition of these affairs is tolerable. 'All hope abandon, ye who enter here,' was the inscription over Dante's gate of Hell. In view of the whole treatment of those who, either from the visitation of God, adversity, accident, or the volition of their own depraved wills, have occasion, in the interest of general wellbeing, to occupy a 'prison home,' might not that inscription fittingly be displayed over the fatal entrances of our common gaols? In respect of the youthful convicts who, possibly for the first offence, to chain-gang doomed, enters these gates have not the terrible, despair-inspiring words of Dante a peculiar moral fitness? To the insane person, caged in a noisome, dank cell, with murderers, thieves and robbers for associates, and wholly destitute of that treatment and those surroundings favorable to the return of truant reason, would not the inscription be singularly applicable in a mental sense? A penitentiary would appear, therefore, to be necessary as a means of affording proper accommodation, treatment and discipline to a by no means small class of criminals. With the removal to a penitentiary of those who would form fitting subjects for that institution, our common prisons would be capable of such arrangements as would admit of the proper classification and treatment of such criminals as would naturally belong to that department, and might, possibly, admit of temporary provision being made for the better treatment of lunatics, until such a time as a separate institution shall have been created for that class of subjects. But a penitentiary is also highly desirable as a means of *employing* convicts. The pernicious character of the present chaingang system of convict labor has frequently been pointed out. Does it require pointing out? Surely no observant person in the enjoyment of a healthy moral tone of mind can fail to see that the influence of the system of marching chained convicts through the public thoroughfares is a most pernicious, damning one, both as regards those who wear the chains and those who hear their clanking. The establishment of a penitentiary would render all such 'relics of barbarism' unnecessary. Occupation, at once suited to the convict and remunerative to the colony, would be provided within the ample walls of the institution, and the inmates would become the subjects of a system of healthful, and salutary discipline, and of moral and religious training calculated to elevate and reform, instead of degrading and hardening in crime, as at present. However keenly the want of such an institution may have been felt in the past, the fact could not be well ignored that to establish, equip, and maintain in a state of thorough efficiency a penitentiary commensurate with the present and prospective exigencies of the colony must involve an amount of expenditure somewhat disproportionate to present financial means. This difficulty at once disappears under Confederation; and it will, therefore, become the duty of those upon whom the responsibility of adjusting the bases of union falls to make fitting provision for the early establishment of a Provincial Penitentiary for British Columbia.

THERE is really no demand for house-room at San Francisco. Empty tenements are plentiful—so are empty pockets; consequently, the lumber market is dull and Puget Sound and British Columbia suffer indirectly. Again must we anthematize that Horrid Railroad.

Sunday Feb 13

INDIAN MURDERS AND PIRACIES.—Mr Chas Mulloy, who returned the other day from a copper exploring expedition to Knight's Canal, informs us that while there he conversed with a man named McGraw, formerly of Nanaimo, who informed him that on the 23d of March, 1868, a man named John Knight, owner of the trading sloop Eliza, and his cousin, named Mathers, were murdered at an Indian village 60 miles north of the canal and the sloop sunk. The perpetrators were five Indians, who are well known to all the tribe at Knight's Canal and to Mr Mulloy's informant. Mathers was sitting in the companion-way reading a book, when the five Indians stole alongside in a canoe and shot him dead. Knight was lying in his bunk; hearing the shot, he ran up the ladder, when he, too, was shot dead. Knight's body was then bound to the mast of the sloop, which was scuttled after being pillaged. The wreck of the sloop can be easily found. It is said that the late Governor Seymour intended touching at the scene of the murder, but was prevented by death from carrying out his design. The murderers are very defiant, and snap their fingers at the bare idea of white authority, and since the murder of Knight and Mathers have decapitated a squaw belonging to another tribe and stolen a number of blankets. The perpetrators of these murders are located in the very track of trading vessels and canoes bound up the coast, and no prospecting can be done in the country in consequence of the savage nature of the tribes. Mr Mulloy is stopping at the Telegraph Hotel and is prepared to furnish full information to the authorities.

FRENCH BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.—The annual statement of the French Benevolent Society appears this morning. During the fiscal year just closed the Society has increased its assets by $472—$400 of which amount has been deposited in the Government Savings Bank at 5 per cent interest per annum and there is on hand ready for an emergency $289 94. Additions have also been made to the appurtenances of the Hospital, so that the comfort of patients is enhanced. A modest prospectus accompanies the statement, from which it appears that subscribers, in case of illness, are entitled at the Hospital, to medical attendance, medicines, nurses, and all the comforts of a home. Should they prefer not to enter the Hospital they may procure advice or medicines free of charge: if waited upon at their residences, the physician's fee is one dollar per visit—medicines free! The officers of this most excellent institution are:—President, S Driard. Vice President, Jules Rueff. Treasurer, John Kriemler. Secretary, Honore Passerard. Directors Messrs Felix Le Louis, Pierre Tisset, and John Vogel. Medical Attendant, Dr Powell. The benefits of the Society are not confined to the children of France. Representatives of all nationalities, upon payment of the trifling fee of $1 per month, are entitled to share the advantages. The annual banquet of the society will be held at the Colonial Hotel on the evening of the 24th February.

THE MISSING SCHOONER VICTORIA PACKET. Upwards of five years ago the schooner Victoria Packet sailed from Nanaimo for Victoria with a cargo of coal, and never arrived at her destination. It has all along been supposed that she struck a rock in the Narrows and sunk with all hands. Lately, it is reported, information has been received that the crew were murdered in Cowichan Gap by Cowichan Indians and the vessel robbed and scuttled. The information is said to have come from a Cowichan squaw. The truth or falsity of this report will be ascertained as speedily as possible.

RUNNIN A GOOD THING INTO THE GROUND. A lawyer in St Louis lately resorted to forgery to meet the premiums on his life insurance policies. He had insured his own life for $40,000, and his father's (aged 86) for $24,500. The premium on these amounts was $7000 per year. If the old gentleman had died, forgery would have been unnecessary.

THE VERUNA.—This runaway steamer, now restored, after many weary months spent in the Admiralty Court, to the hands of her rightful owners, took a trial trip yesterday to the outer harbor, under command of Captain Jackson. The machinery worked well and the beautiful little vessel made splendid time. She will return to Puget Sound in a few days.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.—Yesterday we miscounted by one the honorable noses absent. Mr. Walkem, an appointed member, is in San Francisco and may not return for some weeks. There will be three members absent when the speech is delivered on Tuesday, unless the Emma should bring Mr. Holbrook from New Westminster.

ANXIOUS TO BE HUMBUGGED.—Two passengers who left by the Active yesterday are on their way to locate upon a 'rich' silver lead just struck in that greatest of modern humbugs, White Pine. Will people never profit by the experience of others? or must every one put his head in the lion's mouth before he will be satisfied that the brute has teeth and will bite?

ODD FELLOWS.—A new Lodge of Odd Fellows has been organized in this city under the title of Columbia Lodge No 2. The officers will be installed on Tuesday evening and the Lodge will open for work on the following evening.

DEATH OF A PIONEER.—Mr Thomas Cameron, a much respected citizen, died yesterday morning of consumption. Mr Cameron carried on an extensive wheelwright establishment on Cormorant street. He came to this city in 1858 and leaves a wife and several children.

THE ACTIVE sailed at 10 o'clock yesterday morning. She carried away 15 passengers and 20 tons of freight. Among the passengers were Rev Mr Duncan and Master Cridge, A R Green, Mr and Mrs Brodrick, L Wolf, and Miss Archer.

ONE hundred seagoing vessels are moored at San Francisco awaiting employment, and one hundred captains are wearing away shoeleather at the Merchant's Exchange in the same city. That Horrid Railroad!

THE next direct steamer will sail from San Francisco for Victoria on the 24th inst.

A Voice from a Rural District.

EDITOR BRITISH COLONIST:—The annexation champions ought to tell us all the benefits of being under the Star Spangled Banner—the introduction of such scenes as recently happened in Steilacom, when two poor wretches were butchered. How would such affairs do in Victoria?—the pop of the rifle as some poor creature was pursuing for his life would leave no need for Jack Ketch. By annexation we could discharge Judge Needham and get one of those incorruptible American judges who are so plentiful. By annexation we would get rid of all trouble about the unoccupied land held by speculators. It could be jumped, and if owners attempted to defend their rights—no expense for lawyers—fight it out—it would be excellent sport for the spectators if they did not object to the risk of a bullet—but there are drawbacks to everything. By annexation, as we want population, we might get some of the champions of those frequent rencountres that we read of in the States, where two or three get killed, and if one of these ruffians should fire with his revolver into a crowded ball room (as has been done on the other side) would there not be the fun, if you did not get hit, of getting your rifles to hunt the fellow down? What excellent sport! It would take too much room for me to describe all the benefits and beauties of annexation. At least nine-tenths of the British population are so uncivilised as to be loyal to their glorious native land, with her pure judges and incorruptible statesmen, sadly neglected as we have been, and to say as they look back to their own sea-girt isle, 'England, with all thy faults, we love thee still.' So, Mr Editor, I am afraid we cannot get annexed till we get more civilized.

But wait a little longer,
There's a good time coming, boys,
There's a good time coming, boys,
When we get annexation—
Only wait a little longer.

JAMES FLEMING, JR.

Kelvinside, Quamichan, Feb 8, 1870.

Wrong Time.

VICTORIA, Feb 12, 1870.

EDITOR BRITISH COLONIST—In the *Evening News* of yesterday's date, you will find among the items that the steamer California would leave for Portland at 9 o'clock this morning. Several persons went down at that hour and found that the steamer had left long before. Thus the *Evening News*, instead of being an authority on this matter, is a perfect *News*ance and misleads the public. I shall probably lose $200 by the delay. VICTORIA.

Prince Bonaparte's Challenge to Rochefort.

The French journals just received give the text of the letter of Prince Bonaparte to Henri Rochefort:

PARIS, January 7th, 1870.—*Monsieur*: After outraging, one after another each of my relatives, and sparing neither women nor children, you insult me by the pen of one of your workmen. It is all natural, and my turn should come. Only I have, perhaps, an advantage over the greater part of my family—that of being a plain, private individual, although being a Bonaparte. I therefore demand of you if your breast is a guarantee for your inkstand, and I avow that I have only a mediocre confidence in the result of the step. I learn indeed, by the journals, that your constituents have given you an imperative command to refuse all honorable reparation, and to preserve your precious existence. Nevertheless I take the chance, in the hope that a feeble remnant of French sentiment will cause you to depart, in my favor, from the measures of prudence and precaution in which you take refuge. If, therefore, by hazard, you consent to draw the bolts which render your precarious person doubly inviolable, you will find me neither in a palace nor a chateau. I reside quite plainly at No 56 Rue d'Auteuil, and I promise you that if you present yourself it will not be said that I am out.

Awaiting your reply, I have again the honor to salute you.

PIERRE NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

To M Henri Rochefort, No 3 Rue d'Abonkir, Paris.

The Story of Pompeii.

Most people know that Pompeii was buried by a volcanic eruption A D 76, and that, long centuries after, certain exhumations were made leading to archæological discoveries surpassing for interest any of which the modern world has record. But comparatively few are aware that since the Italian revolution of 1860 more has been learned of the unfortunate city than perhaps had accumulated during all the preceding years since the catastrophe. Light follows liberty and one of the first acts of the new Government was that of appointing Signor Fiorelli inspector of the excavations, with facilities no similar officer had before enjoyed. This gentleman who has the rare fortune to unite the culture of a scholar with the practical energy of a good business man, soon had a large force busily at work. No fewer than 700 men have sometimes been working under his orders and the results have been most propitious. The chronicle of previous work is brief enough, and may be mentioned by way of contrast with that of the last decade. In the year B C 63 a premonitory earthquake had desolated Pompeii. It had destroyed several temples, the great Basilica, the colonade of the forum and the other important buildings, besides others of lesser note. The people fled but subsequently returned and set themselves to the task of restoration. Building was a slower process then than now but the Temples of Venus and Jupiter of Isis and of Fortune all went up again, and Pompeii if somewhat debased architecturally was more showy and luxurious than ever. The Emperor Titus thought it was a pity that all this splendour should be lost, but the Senators he sent to view the site and estimate the expense of digging the town free of its terrible incubus of ashes, were frightened by the magnitude of the task and the idea was abandoned. Thus in time the very place where Pompeii had stood was forgotten.

Towards the end of the XVI centur, an aqueduct from the Sarno to Torre dell' Annunziata was carried straight through the heart of the buried city, following streets and piercing walls. Yet no one said aught of Pompeii and it was not until 1748, under Charles III, after the world had been excited by the discovery of Herculaneum that a certain prying engineer, Alcubiera by name, got the royal permission to excavate near the site of the former place, and began to find out what was hidden there. Even then neither this adventurer nor others ever mentioned Pompeii. They thought he was working over Stabiæ. Little was done at this or any other time under the Bourbons. The men in charge would occasionally find something and then, for the most part, would cover it up again, so that on the visit of some royal or other distinguished person, they might flatter their visitor by pretending to make a surprising discovery in his presence. When the Bonapartes prostrated the Bourbons, early in the nineteenth century, the energy of the Republic of '60 was in a manner prefigured. Caroline, Napoleon's sister and Murat's queen, was enthusiastically interested in the works and caused them to be energetically advanced. The Bourbons returned and all stood still again until the cry of free Italy was heard, and with Victor Emanuel came Fiorelli. Since then, as we have said, the ground over Pompeii has been worked with almost as much vigor and eagerness as the gold diggings of California, and since then, consequently, the returns have been commensurate with the investment of capital and labor.

Streets, houses, theatres have one by one been exhumed, inscriptions deciphered, trinkets, coins and household utensils collected, jars of cosmetics and phials of medicine, and lately even such ordinarily perishable things as loaves of bread. Eighty one of these have been discovered by Fiorelli in a single oven—the place having been so sealed that no ashes entered it, and the bread was found exactly in the order in which it was placed on that dreadful 23d of November, '79, when the fierce strife of the gladiators at the Amphitheatre was interrupted by the lava storm from Vesuvius. All sorts of things have been found, unthought of even at the time the admirable copies of Pompeiian architecture, &c., were constructed at the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. Posters bearing entreaties to vote for such an one for *ædile*, love messages written on back walls, articles of female apparel or ornament, paintings in full preservation, poor animals held fast by chains which prevented their escape from the burning destruction, and so dying where they stood, and worse still, human prisoners in the gladiator's barracks immovably riveted by the ankles to iron racks. Of course only the skeletons of these remained; but if no human form, rounded as in life, has been discovered, there has been found what is so precisely like it as to be no less mournfully impressive. We are told by M Monnset—a French writer who has published this and other cognate information in an interesting monograph—that recently, in a small street under heaps of rubbish, the workmen perceived an empty space, at the bottom of which were some bones. Signor Fiorelli, who was at once called, had a luminous idea. He made them mix plaster, and poured it into the hollow as in a cast. The operation was repeated in other instances close by. Afterwards, the crust of pumice stone and hardened ashes was carefully removed. When this was done, four apparently perfect human bodies lay calmly below. Their flesh had sustained their hot shroud of ashes until it had cooled and crusted, and as that flesh had withered away the spaces had been left which Fiorelli now so ingeniously filled.

The Article which led to the Assassination.

The following is the article which led to the assassination of Mr. Noir:

'There are singular people in the Bonaparte family whose ambition cannot be satisfied, and, who, seeing themselves positively thrown into the shade, grow spiteful at never attaining power. They resemble those old maids who have never found a husband, and who bewail the lovers they never had. Let us place in this category of unfortunates Prince Pierre Napoleon Bonaparte, who permits himself to write newspaper articles in his leisure hours. He inhabits Corsica, where he wages war against the radical democracy; but he meets with more Waterloos than Austerlitz! The *Revanche*, a Democratic journal of Corsica, initiated us into his defeats, and gave us a specimen of the articles of the so-called Prince. Irritated to see Republican ideas invade the soil of his family, the Prince published a long letter in a paper threatening to rip up his adversaries. Here is a specimen of the Prince's prose: 'Whom the brave soldiers, skilful sportsmen, hardy sailors and industrious farmers of Corsica would have put to rot in the fields if they had not been withheld?

'As may be seen, the Prince does not write with a light hand. Scratch a Bonaparte and you see a wild beast appear. * * The nation is the judge of such conduct. What will it think when it learns that this Prince Pierre Bonaparte is the same who, in 1848, addressed a Republican proclamation to the Corsicans, in which are to be found protestations, offers and oaths only to be equalled by those found in the proclamations of him who is called Napoleon III, by the grace of violated oaths and the *coup d'etat*? However used one may be to fluctuations, one may still find it strange that a man should have said twenty years ago, 'My father was a Republican, therefore I am one by conviction, by instinct, by tradition,' and that this same man should to-day treat as traitors whom 'their parents would have flung into the sea in a sack,' citizens who have remained faithful to their convictions, their instincts, their traditions.

'Fortunately, the cruel experience of the past gives us, for the future, some rules by which to shape our conduct. Let the future Republic beware of all who bear the name of Bonaparte, of anything that borders on Princes, Kings or Emperors! And let Corsica continue her valiant democratic propaganda. France, her adoptive mother, pardons her for having produced the Napoleons.'

Religious voluti Reon in Madagascar

(From the 'Daily News.' Dec. 24.)

A remarkable religious revolution has taken place in Madagascar. We learn by a letter from Rev W Pool, dated from the capital on the 28d of Sept, and published in a weekly cotemporary, that the Queen has had the royal idols publicly burned, that she and her aristocracy have embraced Christianity, and that the whole province of Imerina in which the capital is situated has followed the example of the Government. The Queen embraced Christianity early in the year, and has all summer been building a chapel royal. Meanwhile, the wooden fence around the temple of the great national idol has been pulled down, and the priests assumed a threatening aspect, even hinting that their god had medicine which would avenge him on their heretic Sovereign. On the 8th of Sept they came in force to the capital to claim their rights as nobles. A Council was called and it was decided to send the Chief Secretary of State and other high officials to the sacred village, seven miles from the capital, and burn the idol before its keepers returned. They set off the same afternoon and by an authority from the Prime Minister seized the idol's house. The wood of the fallen fence was collected, a fire was made and the contents of the temple were taken out to be burned. First, the long cattle carried before the idol in procession was thrown in; then twelve bullocks' horns from which incense or holy water had been sprinkled; then three scarlet umbrellas and the silk robe worn over the idol by the keeper who carried it. Then came the idol's case—the trunk of a small tree hollowed and fitted with a cover; and last of all the idol itself. Hardly any of the present generation had seen the god, and great was the surprise when he was produced. Two pieces of scarlet silk about three feet long and three inches wide, with a small piece of wood about as big as a man's thumb inserted in the middle between them, so that the silk formed as it were two wings, was the great god of Madagascar, whose touch was sanctifying and whose nearness was preservative. 'You cannot burn him, he is a god,' said the people. 'If he be a god he will not burn,' said the officers; 'we are going to try,' and held it on a stick in the fire that the people might see it as it was consumed. The victory was complete. Next day four other idols shared the same fate, and the rest followed. One was a little bag of sand; another consisted of three round pieces of wood united by a silver chain. The people looked on in wonder, and when the process was over, seeing that they had no gods to worship, they sent to the Queen to ask what they were to worship for the future. The government, says the *English Independent*, adding to the information contained in Mr Pool's letter, thereupon appealed to the native Christians to send Christian teachers, and they at once responded. It was found that of 280 towns and villages in Imerina, 120 already had Christian churches, and teachers were at once found for all the rest. This movement, which is remarkable for its purely native origin, is another proof that in certain stages of civilization nations may be converted by authority. The conversion of Madagascar has been accomplished in the nineteenth century much as that of the Saxons was accomplished in the sixth. The iconoclast is the reformer's forerunner. To overthrow a fetish worship the fetish itself must be first destroyed.

AN American gentleman now traveling in Europe and writing very interesting letters to the St Louis *Republican*, thus speaks of the boys of England: 'The best thing I have seen in England are the boys. We are impressed everywhere, in city and country, with their attractive appearance. Neat, appropriately dressed, respectful in manners, and intelligent looking, they are almost invariably pleasant to see and suggestive of good home training. Even on public days, when one expects to see boys disorderly, I have remarked nothing unbecoming. Of course it is but limited observation from which I speak, but I cannot but augur well for the future from such indications. Nor do I see anywhere the symptoms of English decadence of which we read. England is good, depend upon it, for another thousand years. The next generation will surpass the present, and by gradual reforms she will advance to greater prosperity than she has ever yet known.'

'X'—A number of letters await your order at the Colonist office.