The Weekly British Colonist AND CHRONICLE.

Saturday, August 15, 1868

Government Advisers.

It has been noticed by writers of all ages that men who have much power and are in positions of authority have, generally speaking, not very much virtue. The cynics used to argue from this principle of human nature that it was impossible for men high in power to make friends who were agreeable from their virtue or useful for honorable deeds or actions; that those in authority use friends for different purposes to those in middle life, who make friendships amongst persons in the same station of life with themselves; the latter choosing their friends from amongst those who are upon a perfect equality with them, do so for the sake of having pleasant persons to associate with; they do not want friends who will be useful to them, consequently they seek for those that are agreeable, and these generally make good friends. The former may seek out friends that are agreeable, but they must also be useful. Admitting that it was quite possible for a good man to be at once agreeable and useful, ancient philosophy used to say that such a man will seldom be of the class from which the man in power selects his friends. He generally desires two kinds of friends—those who will help him to get through the tedium of life by their good companionable qualities, who will, in fact, contribute to his amusement; and those who will be clever in executing his commands—who will gratify his desire of being honored. It is somewhat surprising that as the world grows older and there is an improvement in arts and sciences, and in all the surroundings of man, there should be so little improvement in man himself. The same good and bad qualities are found amongst men of the present day as have been praised and held up to censure any time for the last twenty centuries—nay, we might almost say since the world began. We do not profit by the good teaching and the great examples that from time to time in all ages have shone out like bright lights in the world. Hence it is that the same arguments may be urged in the present day respecting the friendships of those who are governing; and if it be an axiom that Governors cannot choose truly good friends from amongst the governed, to this we may trace many of the evils which must always appertain to the system of government known in what are called Crown Colonies; they partake too much of despotism. Unless the Governor of such a Colony is a man so constituted by nature that he can, by constant intercourse with the people over whose destinies he exercises a control, familiarize himself with their wants and desires, and by a judicious selection of such advisers as the constitution allows him, inaugurate and carry out measures to overcome the defects of the system, the very nature of the form of Government renders it distasteful and repugnant to the Anglo-Saxon race. Unfortunately the Governor of this Colony does not seem to be aware that there is any necessity for personal exertion or intercourse with others on his part, or that he has any duties to perform towards the people of the Colony, beyond those which appertain to any country gentleman in England, who holds position in the society of his own country. The business of life with the Governor as well as with many of the principal officials here, would seem to be to pass life over as comfortably and easily as under the circumstances he is able to do. Whether British Columbia is over-taxed and over-governed or the contrary does not seem to cause him the slightest care or anxiety. We can understand this apathy on the part of the Governor, he has but a few years to get through amongst us; and if his own sense of duty does not keep him up to the mark, there is but little else to stimulate him; we have seen enough of him to be justified in saying that he is never likely to step to the front from out of the ranks of Colonial Governors, nor to aspire to the highest Colonial prizes; and if he seeks employment from the Colonial Office after his term here has expired, mediocrity of talent and want of energy will, we regret to say, be no bad recommendations for him. With the Government officials the case is very different—none of them can be so dull as to fail to perceive that sooner or later there must be a change in the system of Government. So long as we have active and useful public servants and economy, with a due regard to the public service studied, no outcry for change will make itself heard; but when finances are low and the people are burdened with taxes to pay salaries which are, in their estimation, extravagant and unnecessary, a feeling is roused which cannot be kept down, and moderate and earnest men join in the cry for reform and change. So it is with our own case: the whole of the population outside of the Civil Service are unanimous in desiring some change; they may at present be somewhat divided as to what would be best for the future of the Colony, but the party which is numerically the strongest will most assuredly prevail, and when a radical change takes place, what, we ask, will become of the Government staff? Shortsighted indeed are those who are in a position to advise the Executive now if no higher motive stirs them, the conviction that a failure in their duty now, will result in their being swept away from notice when the change comes, might influence them. If those amongst our Government officials who have the power and the courage to speak out, could see how much their future in this Colony depends upon a bold performance of their public duty now, they would scarcely dare to repose another day in silence.

Tuesday, August 11.

POLICE COURT.—There was an unusual array of cases in this Court yesterday, and of more importance than usual. The first was the case of W. Brown, mate of the schr. Crosby, charged with cutting James Burns with a knife. Burns is the manager of a Saloon on Yates street, and on last Thursday morning, early, he and the prisoner had an altercation, when the latter threatened to cut him. Brown followed Burns behind the bar, and in attempting to eject him the assault was committed. Burns received several cuts, and is still suffering from them. As it was supposed there might have been mutual provocation given, the prosecutor wished the case dealt with summarily, but His Worship did not consider he had the power to do so, and felt it his duty to send the case to a higher Court. The prisoner was ordered to find bail himself in £200 with two sureties of £100 each, to appear when required. The Indian arrested under the charge of being a suspicious character, was remanded. A half-breed Indian for cutting another Indian was also remanded. Thomas Wright was charged with assaulting Thomas White, who seemed to be an original but dilapidated individual. Mr White wanted a bottle of beer for a *bit* at the 'Prince of Wales,' when after using his tongue and fists freely on being refused, he was summarily ejected from the room. Wright, however, was fined $10, or in default of payment to be imprisoned 14 days.

IMPORTANT MARINE DECISION—In the San Francisco *Commercial Herald and Market Review* we find mention of a decision rendered by Judge Hoffman, on the 6th ult., in the U S District Court, in the case of Wm B Johnson vs. the British ship Industry, which is interesting to ship owners generally. It appears that on the afternoon of December 23d, 1867, a terrific gale was experienced in San Francisco harbor, and during its violence the Industry, with two anchors down and a scope of 60 fathoms of chain on one and 75 fathoms on the other, is alleged to have drifted toward Alcatraz Island until within two or three ship's length of the rocks; that the steamtug Rescue, observing her peril, put off to her assistance, and offered the end of a towing cable, which was taken on board the Industry and made fast; that the tug ranged ahead and after great effort succeeded in towing the ship, with both anchors down around the easterly end of the island and slightly under its lee, where the anchors took hold and ship swung to the tide and wind. For this service the tug company claimed salvage, which was refused by the owners of the Industry, on the ground that the ship was not adrift and was not in actual peril at the time. After a long and close trial, in which the testimony was extremely conflicting, Judge Hoffman held that the tug company was entitled to salvage and decided that the Industry should pay $10,000 currency and costs.

The steamer J. L. Stephens left for San Francisco yesterday afternoon. Her list of passengers was large, but there are but few amongst them from this town, and still less leaving us permanently. There were thirty-eight in the cabin and fifty in the steerage—mostly from Portland. Out of the list fifteen were from the Constantine. Amongst those leaving Victoria were Messrs Wilkie, Anderson and Wigham. Mr Wilkie returns in six months, and Mr Anderson probably in a year. Dr Burton, of the Navy, has also gone to England. It is probable there were not more than half a dozen who have bidden us farewell. The Stephens took 50 tons of freight, consisting of the regular exports of the Colony, and from $150,000 to $180,000 in treasure. There were also twenty-five Southdown rams sent down to California from Dr Tolmie's farm for the improvement of California sheep. The latter is a novel but gratifying article of exportation, and opens out another source of wealth for our farmers and those engaged in the stock business.

EXPLANATION—In reference to the complaints of Thomas Innis about the practice shooting of the Navy, which we published a few days since, we are desired to say that every possible precaution is taken to avoid inconvenience or accidents to the public. A commissioned officer is always out with the shooting parties, and a blank charge from a 32-pounder fired a quarter of an hour before commencing. A red flag is hoisted at the flagstaff close to the butts, and kept up while the practice continues. All artillery practice is to seaward. The captain of the flagship will be ready to investigate complaints and, if necessary, provide a remedy.

SAILORS' HOME—If it is possible to do anything towards carrying out the scheme of establishing a Sailors' Home amongst us, it may as well be attempted now as any time. In about a week the Sparrowhawk will be paid off; some of the crew certainly will need caring for. Subscription lists will be left after to-day at both banks and both Express Offices for the subscriptions of such as may feel inclined to assist the efforts of those who have taken the matter in hand.

THE TELEGRAPH.—The new land line to Saanich, about 13 miles, will be finished this morning, and the connecting links by cable across the islands to the main line *via* San Juan will shortly afterwards follow. The company, since the failure of the cable from Cadboro Bay to San Juan Island, have been performing the service daily, by steamer from this port.

SANDWICH ISLANDS.—The Government of the Islands is encouraging the immigration of Japanese coolies. Vessels have lately arrived with full lists. Four dollars a month and found are the wages given, together with medical attendance; also that they shall return free of charge to Japan, after an absence of three years.

BEAUTIFUL JEWELRY.—We have seen a specimen of Jewelry worked by Mr Jamieson, of this town, from Leech River gold, which is creditable to the colony. It consists of a Scotch thistle, chastely designed and elegantly cut. It goes to Canada as a specimen of our local gold and workmanship.

COUNTY COURT.—In this Court the case of Newell *vs.* Farron was disposed of yesterday. It was a disputed case as to an overcharge for work done, amounting to $65. An order was made in favor of plaintiff for $40 and costs.

ACCIDENT.—Louis Stempler met with a serious accident while out shooting last Sunday; his gun burst and tore his hand very badly. He is under the care of Dr Davie, who thinks in a month's time he will recover the use of his hand.

BUNSTER'S BREWERY.—This building is advancing well, and when finished, will be solid and substantial. The second floor is being laid, and the whole, including residence, will be built with brick.

THE ship Industry sailed from San Francisco on the 3rd inst for Moody's Mill, to load with lumber for Ikuikua, South America.

Cricket.

EDITOR COLONIST,—I take the opportunity of informing those interested in cricket and base ball, and who may not have known of the meeting which took place yesterday, that there is now a good hope of getting a club organized and having the ground belonging to the club put in order. The club purpose to combine, cricket, base ball and other athletic sports, so as to obtain wide support, and I trust all interested in these objects will give us their support. Next year we shall I hope be in a position to accept the challenge from the California Club, which we were compelled to decline solely on account of the decline of the old club. I am also desired to say that there will be a cricket match next Saturday at Beacon Hill, between the married and single and on the Saturday following, a base ball match. All persons who wish to join the club or play in the above games are requested to send their names in to the secretary.

M W T DRAKE,
Hon Secretary.

Victoria, 9th Aug, 1868.

British Columbia and its Capital.

We take the following article from a late London paper. The writer is evidently well informed in the details of which he writes:

"The much vexed question of the capital of British Columbia having been settled in favour of Victoria, Vancouver Island, it may be interesting to give a short outline of the circumstances which have led to the present result.

From the first settlement of Vancouver Island Victoria had been the seat of Government, the social centre and commercial emporium of the whole north-west coast.

Soon after the gold discoveries on the mainland a new colony was formed, upon the name of British Columbia, with New Westminster—at the time a mere clearance in the in the forest—as its capital, under the administration of the Governor of Vancouver Island. After a time the two colonies were entirely disunited and a separate Governor appointed to each. This system not working well and the population of the mainland having considerably decreased, the colonies were again united under Mr Seymour, the then Governor of British Columbia.

Instead of retaining Victoria as the capital of the united colonies, Governor Seymour continued to reside at New Westminster—an inland and practically inaccessible town,—to which he removed not only the Law Courts but even the Custom-house and other public offices. The general discontent which thereupon ensued has at length culminated in the restoration to Victoria of its former position as the seat of Government of the united colonies. Pending these differences, however, many of the settlers left the colony in disgust, and its material prosperity was much retarded from a want of unity of action in all public business.

The controversy lay, not so much between the cities of Victoria and New Westminster as between Victoria, and a large majority of the population of both colonies on the one hand and a small clique of officials, headed by the Governor at New Westminster on the other. These latter, in their forest seclusion, talked themselves into believing what no other man believed, and shut their eyes and ears to what every one else saw and heard. No better proof of the unsoundness of their views can be adduced than their complaint that with the removal of a few Government officials New Westminster will collapse, or in the emphatic language of the west, 'cave in.'

So misled was Governor Seymour by his followers that, in spite of declining population and general bankruptcy, he still maintained that the colony was highly prosperous. In real or assumed ignorance, and in the face of memorials and public meetings on the subject, he stated in his opening speech to the Legislative Council, in January, 1867, *'that he was informed that the question created an amount of interest which he could not comprehend;'* and, on his eyes being opened, he threatened to advise her Majesty's Government to reject *in toto* the claims of Victoria, unless the agitation (as peaceful as it was legitimate) should cease.

A lesson might have been learnt from the public press of California at this time. So fatuous to them did the removal of the seat of Government from Victoria to New Westminster appear to be, that they at once attributed it to the influence of British Columbia bondholders in England—naturally, though erroneously, supposing that the prosperity of British Columbia was dependent on that of New Westminster.

Under the last arrangement, no doubt a few individuals, who had with great want of foresight, and contrary to every warning on the subject, laid out money on improvements in New Westminster, will suffer from their want of prudence, but to the colony at large the benefits will be incalculable. It is to be hoped that a general reduction of expenditure, suitable to the state of the public purse, will take place, and that united effort will lead to permanent improvement. None is more required than a postal subsidy, with the aid of the Home Government, to place the Colony in direct and regular steamboat communication at least with San Francisco and its connecting links—south, east and west.

An unwilling horse seldom works well, and it is feared that Governor Seymour may yet cling to New Westminster in some shape or other, and so prolong the differences which have already inflicted such evils on the colony. We do not, therefore, anticipate the realization of the full measure of benefit to be derived from a union of interests in one centre of action till the advent of a new Governor, hampered by no predilections or prejudices, and actuated solely by an earnest desire to promote the general interests of the colony at large. How long we shall have to wait for the necessary change remains to be seen."

IF PEOPLE WHO SUFFER from dull stupidity that meets us everywhere in spring, and too often in all seasons of the year, knew how quick it could be cured by taking AYER'S SARSAPARILLA to purge the bile from their systems, we should have better neighbors as well as clearer heads to deal with *

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