The Weekly British Colonist.

Wednesday February 9. 1870.

Progression or Retrogression?

Not long ago the public were made aware of the fact that the Telegraph Company had decided to transfer to the Government the entire telegraph system of the Mainland, including plant, materials and instruments, upon the sole condition of maintenance; the colony, at the same time, to have the right of free transmission over the line to Victoria. It was also stated that the property thus proposed to be handed over as a free gift, cost upwards of $200,000, and could not be replaced short of $150,000. The colonists, and especially those residing on the Mainland, will learn with surprise and regret that it has been decided to decline this liberal offer, and that the consequence will be the abandonment of the telegraphic system of the Mainland, involving, of course, a total loss of the property. It would ill become us to treat lightly the very natural hesitation and perplexity of the Government in regard to accepting a gift presenting some points of resemblance to the fabled elephant; but, after making the most liberal allowance on that score, we find ourselves still unable to approve of the decision arrived at. If the consequences of this decision were measured only by the immediate loss of the means of instantaneous communication between the seaboard and the most remote community in the interior, the case would be serious enough. It will be remembered how important such a medium proved in the case of the great Barkerville fire. Had it not been for the telegraph on that occasion, destitution and distress must have ensued, as fresh supplies could not have been ordered in time to reach Yale before the close of river navigation. It is quite true that, as a commercial enterprise, the telegraphic system on the Mainland has proved a failure. Sufficient evidence of that is found in the determination of the Company either to hand it over to the Government or to abandon it. But it would be very wrong to confine the view of this subject to a mere question of present financial results. Under prevailing depression and stagnation, can failure be written on nothing but telegraphy? Nay, is there in the colony an enterprise respecting which it cannot be truthfully asserted that it has more or less proved a failure, or which, if viewed only in the light of present financial results, would not be abandoned? Have we not one and all been living more or less upon hope, waiting for better times? And is it at the very moment when these long-cherished hopes to full fruition rise, that we are called upon to abandon our telegraphic system,—to take a giant stride backwards, when the world all around is bounding forward? Who does not confidently anticipate an immediate return of prosperity? With increased and increasing population and development would not telegraphy share the common prosperity? At no period since its establishment has such a means of communication been as necessary as it is likely to prove in the immediate future. As a rule we do not regard with much favor the undertaking by Governments of enterprises falling within the legitimate scope of private or corporate effort; but the circumstances surrounding the present case are so exceptional that one is led to waive all those objections which ordinarily apply to the principle. When, owing to the absence of *present* financial success, the Government is asked to step in and avert the loss of such a boon as the telegraphic system is admitted by all civilized communities to be, and preserve to the colony so valuable a property, and when this is asked at a moment when all regard the immediate return of greatly enlarged prosperity as assured, we do not think it is the duty of the Government to hesitate, much less decline. It will scarcely be necessary to point out those circumstances which would enable the Government to maintain and work the telegraph very much more economically than any private company could possibly do. With a staff of officers existing along the entire line, in the form of toll-collectors, postmasters, road-repairers, &c, the maintenance and working of the telegraph would really involve very little fresh outlay. But there is another light in which it may be proper to regard the whole question. It is seen that in Great Britain the telegraph system is being assumed by the Government at enormous outlay, with a view to its incorporation with the postal system of the United Kingdom. Similar steps are being taken in the United States and in the Dominion. This colony is about to become a Province of Canada; and, in view of the assumption of the telegraphic system of the Dominion by the Federal Government, surely it ill becomes us to throw away a valuable property which might well be presumed to swell the assets of the colony by so large a sum. In view of all the circumstances, and making the fullest allowance for the straitened condition of the colonial finances, it is difficult to see how the Executive can justify itself to the people in refusing to preserve so much valuable property. An earnest desire to see the emergency met in some way induces us to suggest whether or not the Telegraph Company would place the Government in a position to be exonerated from any obligation to maintain the line beyond a stated period of, say, two or three years, should it be found to involve a greater outlay than would be commensurate with the advantages accruing therefrom. The Government, we feel assured, will find the company disposed to meet them in the most liberal spirit, and we respectfully suggest an attempt at compromise before finally deciding on so serious a step as the abandonment of our telegraphic system, at the very moment when it would appear to be most needed. Let us hope the matter has not yet gone beyond that point which would admit of a reconsideration of the whole subject and the reopening of negotiations between the Government and the Telegraph Company. We feel conscious that upon this subject we speak the sentiments of the great bulk of those from whose pockets would have to be met any expense that might be involved in such an arrangement; and we feel all the more free to press the point in view of the fact that we are in no danger of being suspected of selfish motives. To the newspaper publisher in British Columbia the electric telegraph is anything but a personal advantage. It is the great absorber of all hard earnings—the horse-leech which is ever consuming and is never satisfied. Did we adopt the narrow, selfish view of direct personal gain we would be found lustily shouting—'Away with telegraphy!'

Sunday Feb 6

CALICO BALL.—One of these balls was held at Toronto (Ontario) in December. It was attended by upwards of four hundred persons, including the bulk of the *elite* of the city. As the name implies, the ladies dressed in calico, to a description of which the *Globe* devotes nearly a column. That paper says, 'Some of the gentlemen went into the calico idea, too, and came out strong. One was dressed in the traditional blue coat with brass buttons, buff pants, buckled shoes, and the whole capped with a flaming calico waistcoat. Another had a calico necktie of extraordinary dimensions, and as he walked through the hall presented a most bucolic appearance. One had a square yard of calico in the shape of a pocket handkerchief which he now waved through the room and again stuck in his breast—in both cases creating a strong impression on the onlookers. Another, although in other details he was in evening costume, had his breast adorned with a flaming red calico 'dickey,' which told with wonderful effect.'

THE CALIFORNIA, S.S., Capt Rogers, arrived at 9½ o'clock yesterday morning from the Sound. As she entered the harbor a stiff breeze from the southwest prevailed. The H. B. Co.'s steamer Enterprise lay at the Company's wharf with steam up bound for Esquimalt, and as the California approached to make the narrow turn necessary to reach Brodrick's Wharf, the wind carried her broadside on towards the Enterprise. Fearing a smash, the captain of the Enterprise ordered his lines cast off and started at full speed up the harbor, showing the California a clean pair of heels and saving his boat from injury by about a length, whilst Capt Rogers steamed on and laid his boat successfully alongside her wharf. The California will load coal at Nanaimo and lime at Orcas Island, and will sail for Portland about Thursday of next week.

THE result of the Newfoundland elections does not seem to grieve our New Brunswick friends very much. The *Fredericton Reporter* declares that if there be one colony more than another of which the Dominion is well rid, that colony is Newfoundland. Except her fisheries, which we can enjoy in any case on the same terms as the Yankees, Terra Nova has nothing to attract either our cupidity or admiration. For one-half the year her people are in a starving condition and during the other six months, when herrings are plenty and codfish fat, they amuse themselves in breaking each other's heads resisting the laws, and in the commission of agrarian outrages. Politically they would unite with the *habitans* of Quebec and this is another reason why we consider they are better out than in.

DIRECT STEAMER.—We understand that negotiations are in progress between the Executive and Mr. Brodrick (representing the North Pacific Transportation Company) for more frequent direct steam communication with San Francisco. Government, we learn, proposes to have a steamer laid on twice a month for this port during March April and May, and the Transportation Company require for the service a sum that approaches nearly or quite $2,500 a trip, while a trip every twenty days may be secured for $1600. We earnestly hope that a bargain will be struck which will give us more frequent communication and *lower fares* as an inducement to immigration.

TIME TO PREPARE.—Is it not time for the 'active force' to move in the matter of preparing for the next Agricultural Exhibition? In justice to the farmers they should have something definite upon which to base their calculations before seed-time arrives. Let those active spirits to whom the public are so much indebted for last year's success be heard from soon.

THE SAVINGS BANK.—In Saturday's *Gazette* is published an abstract statement of the affairs of the Colonial Savings Bank up to the end of the year. It appears from this statement that the deposits amount to $45,396 39, and the small item of $152 59 alone appears as representing the expense incurred in establishing five offices and setting the machinery in motion. This is certainly a satisfactory exhibit for the first six months of the existence of the institution. It appears that the deposits at the head office here amounted to $35,430 05. At New Westminster, $5,671 34. At Nanaimo, $3,100 58. At Yale, $701 25. At Cariboo, $340 58.

GOVERNMENT WORK.—The Lands and Works Department are grappling successfully with an old-time grievance. They are laying down a splendid six-foot walk along the Square on which the Public Buildings stand, so that pedestrians will henceforth experience no difficulty in crossing the Square dryshod. The wretched condition of these walks has often formed a subject of bitter complaint by newspaper correspondents and others; our friend 'Druid' has taken frequent and very just 'shies' at the state of the communication, but he may now apostrophize his trenchant pen, as Othello did his trusty sword, and declare that his occupation's gone.

THE GREAT OVERLANDER, Mr Alfred Waddington, has gone to Canada to urge upon the Dominion Government the necessity of opening up railroad communication with the Pacific. Mr Waddington is a man of untiring energy and unquestioned ability. Verging upon 70, an age when most men retire from active life, he is keenly sensitive of the glorious destiny of the British North American Provinces, and enters heart and soul into any scheme having for its object their commercial and political advancement. Having come to Canada, Mr Waddington will, we think, reappear among his old Victoria friends some time next summer. He will meet with a right hearty welcome.

THE PUISNE JUDGE.—A deputation of the Law Society yesterday waited upon the Governor with reference to the rumored appointment of a Puisne Judge by the Home authorities. His Excellency informed the gentlemen that a Puisne Judge would surely be appointed—perhaps from one of the colonies—by the Colonial Office, and that the present Attorney General of British Columbia would probably soon be made a Judge and sent to some other colony. The deputation were very cordially entertained by His Excellency.

THE SISTERS.—It is to be hoped that while engaged in apportioning the expenditure for the year, the Executive will not lose sight of the 'Sisters,' those adamantine obstructions to navigation between Hope and Yale. Year after year has the necessity of removing one of these rocks been urged upon the Government, both in the Legislature, and through the Press; but still they stand, the terror of the navigator.

THE THEATRE LEASED.—Mr J W Carter has leased the Theatre until August, in anticipation of the Spring influx of miners and the arrival of the Flying Squadron and the flagship Zealous. There will probably be three performances a week in future, and new talent will be constantly engaged. Carter is an enterprising fellow and deserves unbounded success.

THE DEFECTIVE SIDEWALKS.—We are reliably informed that notices have been served on the owners of property fronting upon defective sidewalks, and that the necessary repairs must be effected within two weeks or the corporation will perform the work and bring suit for the recovery of the cost. The notices had better be obeyed.

"What pleasure can exceed
The smoking of the weed?"

Why, a clean shave or a fashionable haircut by FRED. PAYNE, the great original cheap Tonsorial Artist, of Johnson street, adjoining the Miner's Saloon.

THE MAINLAND TELEGRAPH LINE.—Mr Lamb telegraphs from Olympia that the line north of Sehome, W T., to Quesnel is permanently closed, and that he will be over on the Anderson and start at once for the upper country to discharge the officials and dismantle the line.

WITHDRAWN.—In noticing in yesterday's issue the case *Williams v Wren*, we omitted to mention that a second case of a like nature between the same parties was withdrawn by plaintiff.

FOR BURRARD INLET.—The steamer Emma, Capt Ettershank, sails at 7 o'clock this morning for Burrard Inlet, touching at Nanaimo, taking about 25 tons of merchandise.

The California on her last trip ran from Columbia River Bar to Neah Bay in 15 hours.

The steamship Active probably sailed on Friday for Victoria—at least we have heard nothing to the contrary.

CAPTAIN HIRAM MARR, of Southport, Main, was drowned last January, and when his widow, some months after, applied to a Me P for the payment of a note of $50 which Captain Marr had against him, he averred that he had paid it. As the note was in the pocket of Captain Marr when he was lost no conclusive evidence could be adduced that he had not paid it. But during the heavy gale of last September, the body of Captain Marr, was washed ashore and the note was found upon him in perfect preservation. Mr. P could no longer evade paying it, nor did he seemed disposed to, after the body of the deceased seemed to have risen from its burial place to demand it—*Kennebec Journal.*

THE officiating clergyman at the marriage of a deaf and dumb couple, wittily and gallantly wished them 'unspeakable bliss.'

The Last of the Ainsley Romance.

FLIGHT OF THE HERO AND HUMILIATION OF 'LADY AINSLEY.'

(*From the New York Sun of Jan. 13th.*)

Fashionable society has been excited by the sudden and unexpected departure from town of the notorious scamp Dick Radford, who passed himself off as Lord Hurbert L S Ainsley. He has left behind his young and beautiful wife, and a small, sorrowing army of creditors. About two weeks ago the would-be Lord and Lady left their elegant residence on Madison Avenue, which they had occupied but a few weeks, and repaired to an obscure boarding house in the neighborhood of the St James' Hotel. Previous to vacating the mansion the festive Dick gave a splendid dinner party, which was attended by a number of young gentleman, and this was followed by a *soiree dansante* given by his wife. This latter entertainment proved an utter and mortifying failure, and the couple are said to have been disconsolate for a few succeeding days. Where and how Dick got the money to meet the expenses his sumptuous entertainments involved, has been the subject of general remark at the club, and among the *habitues* of Delmonico's *cafe*. We have it on good authority that the scamp has been supplied with money since his marriage with Miss Martin, last fall, by a former admirer and true friend of the estimable young lady. The voluntary banker of 'my Lord' is a gentleman prominent in social circles in this city, and is associated with his father in business in Wall street. Recently he officiated at a fashionable wedding in town, and is soon to lead to the hymenial altar himself one of the reigning belles of a neighboring city. Radford was and is an inveterate gambler, and is well known as a frequent visitor at many of the up-town hells—one in Twenty-fifth street particularly. He is a man of no honor or principle whatever, and has been known to invite gentlemen to his residence, and cards being proposed, they were soon relieved of their money, watches, and cheques by the accomplished and gentlemanly gambler. Notwithstanding he was supplied from time to time with money (solely on his wife's account), sufficient to meet all his ordinary and necessary expenses, the conceited wretch contracted all kinds of debts throughout the city amounting to five or eight thousand dollars.

When he first moved to the house on Madison Avenue (formerly owned by Mr Prince, now in Europe) he one day drove out in ostentatious style and settled many if not all of his tradesmen's bills, much to the latter's delight, of course. Of late the would-be nobleman has been observed to be dejected and disconsolate, and his friends have not known to what to attribute the sudden change in his Lordship's manner. Various rumors are circulated in society with astounding rapidity, and his assumed name or title is in everybody's mouth. Mrs Grundy said he had lost money in Wall street; others, that he had lost his money at faro. Some of his early friends and *habitues* of Delmonico's hinted that he feared arrest from English detectives now *en route* to New York, while others shook their heads and said it was a shame and outrage, and that Mr Richard Radford should be drummed out of the town as a fraud. Dick evidently followed the example of the celebrated Captain Jinks, who resigned in anticipation of being kicked out of the army, for one morning it was discovered that the bird had flown—in a word, Richard Radford, the notorious swindler, scamp, gambler, fraud and impostor has fled from New York, and few, if any, know of his present whereabouts. On the afternoon previous to his departure his wife and others noticed that the natty little imitation of Beau Brummel was very restless, excited, and apparently ill at ease—so much so that cooling medicine was suggested. But 'my lord' only laughed in his inimitable and fascinating way at the anxious inquiries of his wife and friends, and assured them he never felt more comfortable in both mind and body than at that time. Previous to the dinner hour—6 p. m.—Mr Radford informed his wife he had an engagement to dine with William B Astor, Leonard Jerome, or A T Stewart [he forgot which; 'but then, you know, my dear wife, that's of no consequence'], and would not be home until late. As his lordship's hours were not unfrequently irregular and late, Mrs Radford thought nothing of it, and retired about her usual hour, eleven o'clock.

In the morning she rushed into her husband's apartments adjoining, to find him not there. The bed was untouched, his nobby English trunk was gone, his wardrobe empty, and her watch, diamonds and jewel cases also! It was too palpable that she was deserted, and the conviction came so suddenly upon the young woman she uttered a scream and fell fainting to the floor. The boarders rushed up stairs and burst in the door. On the table was a note from the wretch addressed to his wife, in which he gave her to understand that he had left never to return, and that she never need expect to see or hear from 'Lord Hubert L S Ainsley again.' Mrs Radford has returned to her mother on the advice of her friends, and will soon make application for divorce. Mrs Grundy says she has been very badly treated by her husband, who frequently reached home drunk and beat the hapless girl in the most shameful and heartless manner. Where the arrant impostor fled to no one knows; but there is reason to think he has returned to England in a sailing vessel, or in a steamer under an assumed name. Not coming into possession of his wife's property, as he hoped, is said to have been a heavy blow to the fellow, who thought to possess himself of it and then desert his wife. Mrs Radford is very ill at her mother's residence on Staten Island with brain fever, and grave fears are entertained that she may not recover. Friends of the family have put detectives on the track of the flying thief, and it is hoped that he may be caught. The sudden exodus of the notorious man from the Madison Avenue residence, is said to have been effected by the agent in this city of the owner, who telegraphed from Europe to 'put him out at all hazards.'

THE Empress Eugenie has returned from her Eastern tour dreadfully sunburnt. It will require a large amount of cosmetics to restore her Majesty's normal complexion.

Disgraceful State of Cormorant Street, and Bad Faith of the Municipal Authorities.

EDITOR BRITISH COLONIST:—I am one of the unfortunate residents of Cormorant street, between Government and Douglas, and have just reason to complain of the conduct of the Municipal authorities in leaving the street in the disgraceful state it now is, after receiving $100 from us upon their pledged word that it should be well gravelled immediately after being graded. Months have passed by since the latter was done and now it is a perfect quagmire, impassable for drays, wagons, &c. Kwong Lee & Co have left their store in consequence, after paying $35 towards the promised improvement; and as regards myself it not only prevents my factory becoming more generally known and visited, consequently injuring my business, but adds to my expenses both in the reception of feel for my engine, lumber for my business and the delivery of goods, as all have to be carried on the sidewalk to and from the junction of Douglas street. Had it been a private contract the contractor would, in my opinion, be liable for damages for its non-fulfilment, even if not open to a charge of receiving money under fraudulent pretenses.

WM JONES,
Sash and Door Factory.

Charles Dickens' Readings.

MR GEO. PAUNCEFORT'S READINGS.—This style of entertainment has become quite popular throughout the country—that is, when the party presenting the same has the essential qualities for his task. It is only fair and just to state that there is not one in a thousand, even among professional people, who have the requisite characteristics. It requires an easy and graceful demeanor, a flexible and well modulated voice, a thorough knowledge and appreciation of general character, a cultivated taste, a magnetic influence to infuse the spirit of tragic and comic situation with decided force and expression; an inspiring vitality, with all the practical knowledge which time and opportunity alone can give. Mr George Paunceforte possesses these advantages in an eminent degree. He comes from the best school; he has been tried in all the metropolitan places and has never been found wanting. His 'Enoch Arden' on Tuesday evening last was a gem. He seemed to have the hearts of his auditory, as it were, in his hand. His natural, unaffected style carried all with him in the lighter portion of the tale, while the more affecting situations were rendered with that telling and powerful effect that illustrated the magnetism which Mr Paunceforte possessed over his audience. 'Dr Marigold's Pills' terminated a most charming evening's entertainment, possessing all the elements of most enjoyable material divested of any negative quality. We understand Mr Paunceforte has been solicited and will appear again for the benefit of the Episcopal Church on Tuesday evening next: *Walla Walla Statesman.*

A Remarkable Story from Rome.

A correspondent writing from Rome tells the following remarkable story respecting the early life of the Pope. It is certain that there is some mystery in connection with his taking the vows of the priesthood, and this narrative may help to solve it. Speaking of the appearance of the Pope, who is now a fine looking man, and who must have been a noble specimen of manhood in his youth, the writer says—

Those who are nearest to him and who ought to know him well, say he is a very kind-hearted man, but is dreadfully afflicted by his ministers and agents who ought to do his bidding, but who would use him for their own worldly purposes. The world at large does not know that fifty or sixty years ago he was engaged to be married to a Miss Foster, the daughter of an Irish Bishop, and the sister of the Countess de Salis, famous at that period in Italian Society; and that the lady and her friends waited at the altar of the church of S Luigi de Francesi [near the present Post Office], for Count Mastai-Ferretti to appear and complete his marriage vows, and that they waited and waited in vain, because the young Count never came. Nor is the world aware that the explanation given to her before her death was that his Jesuit relations had forcibly abducted him and sent him abroad under oath of secrecy, which he never divulged till after he was Pope, and that this he caused to be communicated to her to ease his own conscience and her broken heart. I mention this because the Pope is now living, and that he and his Jesuit friends may question or confirm it as they please. I hold the document at length in my own hand which tells the whole story, communicated by one of her near relations, and given me by one whom the venerable Count personally knows and has conversed with and smiled upon since he has occupied the Papal throne.

Somebody's Boy.

Is somebody's mother thinking
"That somebody's boy goes right,"
While somebody's boy is drinking
Somewhere or other to-night?

Who was that somebody tugging
Too heavy a load to-day,
Of brandy and rum and hogging
The posts on the corner, eh?

Who is that handsome fellow,
The handsome face we meet,
Who bore a home so late and so mellow
He can hardly keep his feet?

Who is that somebody reeling
First from the left to the right,
With empty pockets, yet feeling
As rich as crœsus to-night?

Ah! pavements have grown unsteady,
They wave like a wind-blown sheet,
And have interfered already
With somebody's drunken "feet."

And still to the world this drinking
Is neither here nor there;
But somebody's pa, I'm thinking,
Or sister or mother would care.

He'll wake to-morrow, it's patent,
And he'll come down stairs all right,
And look as much like he hadn't
Been out on the "tear" last night.

And somebody's mother and sister,
When told that brother gets "tight,"
Are almost inclined to blister
Your cheek with their hands outright.

But somebody's sins are wearing
The jewel of life away;
And somebody's boy, wearing,
Will die in the street some day.