The Colonist.

THURSDAY, JULY 20, 1899.

THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S VIEWS.

"It was his great object in making his tour through Bennett and Atlin to meet personally the mining and business men of the district and obtain from them their views and suggestions on all matters affecting the welfare of this portion of our province. He hoped that these personal interviews, together with observations made by himself, would place him in a position to suggest certain changes in our present mining laws and in other matters in which the district might be interested, and it would be his great endeavor to have such legislation enacted as he might find was absolutely necessary for the better progress of the country, and to provide against a recurrence of the state of affairs arisen in Atlin. He assured all present that his visit carried nothing of a political character, and with a final thanks to the members of the board for the address presented, he cordially invited all to visit him at any time at his official residence when in Victoria."

The above is from the Bennett Sun and is a summary of the remarks of Lieutenant-Governor McInnes made before the Bennett Board of Trade, in response to an address presented to him when on his way to Atlin. It was a very remarkable speech. If His Honor's remarks have been correctly summarized, it is difficult to imagine a more complete expression of want of confidence in his ministry than he gave utterance to on that occasion. His course in addressing himself personally to an investigation of the conditions existing at Atlin is commendable, and quite within his constitutional rights, although it is undoubtedly very unusual. It is true that he assured his hearers that his visit has nothing of a political nature, but when he speaks of his intention to bring about changes in our mining laws and other matters, and to have such legislation enacted as will prevent a recurrence of such a state of affairs as has arisen in Atlin, he deals with what every one else regards as an essential part of the politics of British Columbia. We submit that such a condition of things has never before been presented in this province. At a time when the organs of the government were assuring us that there was nothing wrong at Atlin, and when the members of the Cabinet were engaged in altercations of a character, such as has never before been exhibited in this province, the Lieutenant-Governor tells an audience that he is on his way to Atlin to discover a remedy for the evils resulting from the legislation and administration for which his advisers are responsible. Such a situation is positively unique.

The date of the paper in which the notable speech was reported was July 8, and the inference is that the speech was delivered to the interested people of Bennett at a time when the people of this part of the province were being regaled by Mr. Semlin's charges of neglect, untrustworthiness and disgraceful conduct against Mr. Martin, and Mr. Martin's charges of incapacity against Mr. Semlin, and downright falsification of public records against Mr. Cotton. The men whose duty it is to formulate the policy of the province and advise the Lieutenant-Governor were bickering amongst themselves for political supremacy, while the Lieutenant-Governor was seeking for light upon a difficult question in order to be able intelligently to advise his ministers and the legislature as to what ought to be done. To state the case is to demonstrate the unfitness of the present ministry to hold the reins of office for a single hour.

We concede fully the right of the Lieutenant-Governor to make the investigations which he has undertaken and commend him for so doing. It is a principle of constitutional government that the crown or its representative may advise the ministry, as well as the ministry the crown. The extraordinary thing about Lieutenant-Governor McInnes' course is that he has boldly declared for a line of policy, which every one knows, who has kept track of events, has not been recommended by his advisers. We submit that his course leaves Mr. Semlin no other alternative than to tender his resignation.

SENATE REFORM.

We do not feel prepossessed in favor of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's resolution looking to restricting the power of the Senate. It will be called a measure of Senate reform, but it is nothing of the kind. It is simply an expedient to overcome a hostile majority in the upper chamber. During the earlier part of the session one of the Conservative members said that the way to overcome senatorial opposition to a bill which had passed the house, was to bring on a dissolution, and if the people pronounced favorably upon the measure, the Senate would always yield. This is the practice in Great Britain, or more correctly speaking it is the theory which obtains in Great Britain, but argument based upon any supposed analogy between the Canadian Senate and the British House of Lords breaks down at the outset; for in the very nature of things the Senate is a political body, which the House of Lords can hardly be said to be. Moreover, as we have pointed out in previous articles, the House of Lords has existed from time immemorial side by side with the House of Commons, while our Senate is a modern creation representative of nothing in particular, and this is said without any wish to reflect upon the upper chamber. It would be clearly dangerous to have it understood that a senate, which is always certain to be more or less of a partizan body, can compel the government of the day to either abandon a measure approved of by the representatives of the people or else call a new election. At the same time we do not like the idea of a conference as suggested by Sir Wilfrid. It is an imitation, and not a very good one, of a feature in the United States constitution of doubtful value.

We think the Conservative party is approaching the question of Senate Reform from a mistaken point of view. The disposition seems to be to treat it as purely a partizan matter. To extreme partizans it may be a very satisfactory thing to have a body of immovable legislators strongly favorable to their political party; but if the shoe happens to get on the other foot, it will not fit so well. We fear that those Conservatives, who are so loud in their praises of everything done by the Senate to embarrass the present government, are cutting a stick for their own backs later on. The political complexion of the Senate is rapidly changing, and if when the Conservatives come into power, as they will certainly do by and bye, they find the Liberal press all over the country calling upon what may then be a Liberal senate to reject Conservative legislation, they cannot very well complain. Therefore we say that the effort of Conservatives ought rather to be to discover if it is not possible to make the Senate more representative of the popular will than it can ever be, as long as membership depends upon the political favor of the government in power when vacancies occur and the tenure of office is for life. If Sir Wilfrid Laurier's resolution becomes a part of the constitution, it would be about as well to abolish the Senate altogether. With a house divided by strong lines of party cleavage and a senate the same, the result of a conference would be a foregone conclusion in nine cases out of ten. If partizanship must be reckoned with in the Senate Chamber, let the fact be recognized boldly and the Senate be made elective. The history of the thirty-two years since Confederation has not demonstrated the usefulness of the Senate to any remarkable degree.

YUKON MILITIA SUPPLIES.

The debate on the supplies to the militia stationed on the Yukon brought out a number of interesting matters, some of which have not been satisfactorily explained. Our special correspondent at Ottawa dealt with a few of these in his letter printed in yesterday's Colonist. We have now before us the Hansard report of the debate, and a few references may be made to it. In all, the militia department in 1898 sent into the Yukon 330 tons of supplies, and the cost of transportation amounted to about $250,000. Some of this went by way of St. Michael, and some by way of the Stikine. This is at the rate of $750 a ton, or 37½ cents a pound. Even admitting the great difficulties surrounding Northern transportation in 1898, it must be conceded by every one that this is an enormous price. It appears that while tenders were not publicly invited, several persons were privately asked to put in bids, and three did so. These were apparently all for the transportation via St. Michael. The prices at which the contract was awarded were $250 per ton to Dawson, and to Selkirk $300 per ton. Very strangely, it was not specified whether this was to be a ton weight or a ton measurement. The supplies sent in by way of the Stikine were taken in by the Hudson's Bay Company, under an arrangement by which the government was to pay the company the actual cost plus 20 per cent., and to assist the company, as far as the militia contingent were able. Eighty tons of goods were sent through this way, and the cost to the government was, in round numbers, $131,000, or $1,400 per ton. This is subject to a small reduction, if the company is able to realize anything out of some horses and mules on hand. This amount also includes all the expenses attending the transportation of two hundred men and their personal baggage. The cost was enormous, but we do not feel free to criticize it, for, in common with most people on the Coast, the Colonist favored sending the militia in via the Stikine. The Hudson's Bay contract ended when the supplies reached Lake Teslin. The expedition left Vancouver in the middle of May, and the first detachment reached Teslin on July 1st, and Selkirk a few days later. The whole expedition reached Selkirk early in September. The C. P. N. carried the goods to Glenora at $40 per ton, the Hudson's Bay Company taking them over there.

Mr. Earle drew the attention of the house to some extraordinary charges made by H. N. Bate & Co., pointing out that the cost of the goods supplied by that firm was much higher than the same goods could be purchased for on the Coast, without taking into account the freight across the continent and the "extraordinary," that is, unusual, special charges on packing. In reply the minister of militia made the surprising statement that he did not understand that the freight to the Coast was to be paid by the government, and that until Mr. Earle directed his attention to the fact, he did not know it had been charged. In regard to the special charges for packing, Mr. Earle pointed out that on the goods supplied to the Mounted Police in Victoria and Vancouver, there was no such charge, the goods being furnished by the merchants in packages as required. One extraordinary charge was for sacks, in which oats were shipped, just as if, to quote Mr. Earle, oats were thrown around loose. On the question of prices, Mr. Earle said they were slightly higher than those for which similar goods were furnished the Mounted Police by merchants of the Coast, but he laid most stress upon the fact that, in addition to these higher prices, there were the charges for freight and extras. He thought the house was entitled to some explanation as to what is to be done about the freight, and he demanded that the item should stand until the explanation had been made. The minister of militia thereupon promised to see Messrs. Bate & Co., and if the agreement was that the goods were to be delivered at Vancouver, to ask them to refund the freight. With this Mr. Earle expressed himself as satisfied.

The discussion was continued by Mr. Earle asking if the Boston & Alaska Transportation Company had delivered its freight according to contract. To this the minister replied that it was delivered in their vessels, but that Mr. Ogilvie had to make arrangements to have the vessels taken charge of and the goods delivered. The government repaid Mr. Ogilvie, but had not paid the company a dollar, and does not propose to, until all the goods are delivered. Then the company will be paid what is fairly coming to them, after deducting any proper charges. The government is not bound by the contract, for the goods were not delivered within the time limit, which was August 31, 1898.

The heartiest supporter of the government will be unable to discover anything in the above impartial summary of the principal points brought out in the debate which will add to the credit of the administration, but much to show that what we concede was a difficult matter was very badly handled.

WRECK BAY GOLD.

The report of the Colonist's representative on the reported find of gold at Wreck Bay proves the anticipations based upon the stories which came down the West Coast to rest upon a very meagre foundation. Our representative shows that the reported finds had a solid basis in fact, but that some very important details were omitted in the original tales. There is gold in the sands at Wreck Bay, but to save it with any available appliances will cost all it is worth. What there may be in the banks or in the interior is as yet pure guess work.

We feel sure that the public will appreciate the steps taken by the Colonist to present a plain, unvarnished statement of the facts in the matter. The first story went far and wide, and we have already been in receipt of inquiries from persons contemplating a trip to Wreck Bay to engage in mining. We hope those of our contemporaries which gave currency to the highly-colored stories sent out will make the necessary corrections. There may be rich places on the West Coast, but they are yet to be discovered.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

The Colonist has on several occasions during the last year expressed the opinion that responsible government was in danger of becoming a lost institution in British Columbia, and recent events confirm this view. According to the theory and practice of this system, when Mr. Semlin asked Mr. Martin to resign the office of Attorney-General, the request ought to have been at once complied with. Does any one suppose that if Lord Salisbury should ask Mr. Chamberlain for his resignation, or Sir Wilfrid Laurier should ask Mr. Sifton to resign, either of those gentlemen would hesitate a moment in complying? If they should refuse, would not Lord Salisbury, in the one case, and Sir Wifrid, in the other, stand discredited before the people as a leader? We do not say that a request by a Premier for the resignation of a member of his cabinet legally terminates the latter's tenure of office. Only the actual dismissal by the crown or its representative can do this, but where the principles of responsible government obtain such a demand from the Premier is regarded as equivalent to a dismissal, for as the crown or its representative can act only on the advice of its ministers, it may be assumed that such a request will be followed by dismissal, if necessary. But Mr. Martin defies Mr. Semlin. He claims the right to continue to sit at the council board with men, one of whom has accused him of complete incapacity, and another of whom he has charged publicly with a grave offence. And the amazing thing about the matter is that the great majority of the people, while conceding that a change of government is called for in the public interest, do not seem to see how inconsistent the whole thing is with the principles upon which the government of the country is supposed to be conducted.

Let one incident of the situation be considered by itself. Mr. Martin made a charge against Mr. Cotton of an extremely serious nature. He made it first to the Premier, and next through the public press. Although this charge has been before the public for several weeks, it has not been denied. We feel bound to say that we do not believe there is a word of truth in the charge. But this is not the point. It has been publicly made by one sworn minister of the crown against another sworn minister of the crown, and it relates to a matter of the gravest public interest. Yet it is allowed to remain uncontradicted, as though the falsification of public records were a mere incident of politics. We have delayed making any comments on this matter, in the hope that either Mr. Cotton or some one in his behalf would meet Mr. Martin's statement with a denial. There has been no denial. Yet such a charge, publicly made, must be cleared up, not so much on Mr. Cotton's account, for if there is no truth in it he can afford, personally, perhaps, to ignore it, but in the interest of public opinion, which will be distinctly lowered if such allegations can be made by one member of a government against another member, and be allowed to remain unchallenged. Does any man suppose that if Mr. Chamberlain were charged by a colleague with a deliberate falsification of the records of the cabinet he would remain for even a day under the charge without denying it and punishing his accuser as he deserved? We refer to this to show how very dull public appreciation seems to be of the responsibility of ministers to the people.

The remarks of the Lieutenant-Governor at Atlin afford another illustration of how far we are drifting away from the principles of responsible government. We have not denied, and do not now deny, the constitutional right of the Lieutenant-Governor to take the duty upon himself of reversing the policy of his ministers, on condition, of course, that he shall find some other ministers to take the responsibility of his action. The extraordinary thing about it is that only a very few people appear to understand that he has made the tenure of the Premiership by Mr. Semlin impossible, if we have responsible government. Let us test this by an illustration. Suppose that the Governor-General should set out on a tour to Klondike, and on passing through Victoria should go before the Board of Trade and declare that the object of his journey was to ascertain for himself what ought to be done to prevent a recurrence of the conditions which formed the basis of the Yukon charges. He would have a perfect right to do so, if he thought the emergency justified it. But if he did, does any one suppose that the Laurier ministry would hold office for an hour, or that public opinion would permit them to do so? Yet what has occurred at Bennett is on all fours with the supposed case. If Mr. Semlin does not meet the Lieutenant-Governor on his return with a tender of his resignation, he will display an utter disregard of the elementary principles of responsible government.

These considerations are of prime importance. Compared to them, the vagaries of a minister, who may imagine that he has been shipped "somewhere east of Suez" are of minor importance. They are only temporary in their effects, but if we allow the principles of responsible government to be lost sight of, the province is altogether at sea, and we will wake up some fine morning to find a personal government installed. The danger is not merely theoretical, for the Constitution Act does not secure responsible government to the province. There is not a line in it to prevent a Lieutenant-Governor from surrounding himself with a ministry, not one of whom has a seat in the legislature, or could be elected to one. No such a condition is at present likely, but if one principle after another is disregarded, no one can tell what may come. So far as the Lieutenant-Governor's action at Bennett is concerned, he would have no difficulty in finding a ministry to accept the fullest responsibility for it. He voiced public sentiment, to which his present advisers have been running counter ever since they were placed in office.

NOT A COALITION.

The Vancouver World speaks of the governments of British Columbia and New Brunswick as coalitions. The description is not correct. A coalition occurs when the representatives of opposing parties meet and determine to unite to form a government. This has not been done either in the Eastern province or here. The World, a staunch Liberal paper, supported Mr. Turner, who was a Conservative, and opposed Mr. Macpherson in Vancouver, although the latter is a Liberal. Mr. Booth, a Liberal, found no difficulty in supporting Mr. Turner, nor Mr. Cotton, a Conservative, in opposing him. The World did not support Mr. Turner because his government was a coalition, for it tells us now that it was really a Conservative government. If we have a coalition government to-day, why has the World opposed it, while its fellow Liberal worker, the Province, has supported it? Why if it is a coalition have not both the News-Advertiser and the Colonist, both being Conservatives, been in accord in supporting it? There has been only one coalition government in Canada since Confederation. Sir John Macdonald's first cabinet was a coalition. It contained old-time Conservatives and old-time Liberals, and the result of the coalition was the "Liberal-Conservative" party, which term some people imagine was adopted to express a certain set of principles, when in point of fact it was simply descriptive of a coalition. This coalition was formed for the express purpose of giving effect to the Confederation scheme, and if there is anything to be learned from it, the lesson is that in emergencies coalitions may be excellent things. There never was a coalition in New Brunswick local politics between Conservatives and Liberals, for the simple reason that local politics never have been divided on those lines since Confederation. The same remark holds true of British Columbia. If Mr. Semlin and Mr. Turner should get together and form a government, that would be a coalition; but if a new government should be formed, composed of men selected without regard to their proclivities in federal politics, it would not be a coalition, any more than it would be a religious coalition, if one of the members of the cabinet happened to be a Methodist and another a Presbyterian. As we are unable to agree with the World that we have had in British Columbia and have now a coalition government, we do not see the force of the arguments which it presents for the consideration of the Colonist.

THE PROVINCIAL LOAN.

Much credit has been taken by the government for the success attending the late loan. We are without sufficient data to be able to comment upon it as fully as we would like, but we know it is not regarded in London as a very brilliant financial transaction. One thing about it may be noted, namely that the government did not attempt to carry out its threatened policy of altering the plan of floating our loans, but after a good deal of needless, and what we believe will be found costly delay, had recourse to the system which they condemned. Our information is that if the loan had been promptly placed on the market in April it would have brought nearly par, and that the cost of floating it would have been considerably less. The price obtained, 96, is not high, in view of the steady advance in provincial credit since the plan of issuing inscribed stock was adopted. The first loan was placed at 86, the next at 91 and the next at 95. With all the great development that has taken place and is now in progress in this province, we submit that a gain of only one per cent. from 95 to 96 in four years for stock which very recently has been selling above par, is not a subject to plume ourselves upon to any great extent. The failure to realize a higher price is not due to any lack of confidence on the part of the investing public in the credit of the province, but to the unbusiness-like way in which the Finance Minister went about placing the loan.

COLD STORAGE.

Mr. Tarte urges Canadian cattle shippers to kill their beef in Montreal and ship in cold storage to Great Britain. To those who have watched the course of the meat trade this suggestion seems very business-like. Cold storage is only in its infancy, although it even now plays a much greater part in the supply of fresh food than persons not in the business imagine. The recent discovery of a process by which air can be liquified at a cost permitting it to be used for industrial purposes is likely to greatly simplify and cheapen the refrigeration of articles, and at the same time ensure better results. It seems probable that at a very early day the greater part of the food supply of congested centres of population will be sold out of refrigeration. The transportation of live stock is attended by a good many risks. Cattle are liable to die upon long rough voyages, and there is always certain to be more or less shrinkage. They are bulky freight, taking up a large amount of room in proportion to the actual amount of material which reaches the retail customer's hands. Meat in cold storage takes up less room; it is not liable to damage in transit any more than any other dead freight, and as every one knows who has used Australian mutton, refrigerated meat when it reaches the table—and this is the final and conclusive test—is equal to any other. The live meat shipments to Great Britain have not been wholly satisfactory to any one. In fact, last year the margin of profit was so doubtful that some of the large Canadian shippers talked of abandoning the trade. The idea of employing cold storage in this connection is not at all new, for it was brought very prominently to the front during the Conservative regime, but the time was hardly ripe to carry it into effect.

The railway subsidy grab-bag will be opened this week. Just how many people will be disappointed at what they get remains to be seen.

Presumably the intimation from Ottawa that the Chinese Immigration Act is to be amended means that the tax is to be increased.

The decision of the Privy Council in Madden vs. the Nelson & Fort Sheppard railway settles the law to be that parliament, by declaring a railway to be for the general advantage of Canada, takes the company out of the control of the local legislature in any way.

For what was to be a short session, the present one at Ottawa is spinning out to a very respectable length. Things look now as if Canada may soon resemble Bermuda, where the legislature sits all the time, except when the weather is cool enough to permit of cricket playing.

Here are a few suggestions as to tramcars. If conductors were instructed to keep a sharp outlook for passengers who may be approaching a street crossing many persons would use the cars who now walk. If the company would provide seats at a few convenient places, more people would wait for the cars at those places, and the revenue of the line would be increased. If people who wish to board a car would wait until those who wish to alight have done so, it would be very convenient all round. The conductors ought to see to this. Conductors ought to be instructed before starting the car from a switch to see if any persons are in sight who wish to ride. If conductors would signal cars which their passengers wish to take on transfers, a good deal of annoyance would be avoided. These are small matters, but they mean more revenue to the company and more convenience to the public.

Deepin Love—What is the best day in the week to get married on, old chap?

Hadder Knuff—Friday, my boy; then you'll have something to blame it on afterwards.—Tit-Bits.

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A KENTUCKY FEUD.

Factions Long at Enmity Do Battle in Streets—Five Killed, Three Wounded.

Louisville, Ky., July 17.—A special to the Courier-Journal from London, Ky., tells of a report reaching there of the outbreak of another feud in Clay county, by which five men lost their lives to-day. The dead are said to be Robert Philpot, Ed. Fisher, Aaron Morris, Jim Griffin and Hugh Griffin. These fatalities resulted from a pitched battle fought near Little Goose creek, three miles from Manchester.

The feud dates back nearly two years. On Christmas, 1897, James Philpot was killed by Aaron Morris, but before he died he shot and killed William Bundy, a friend of Morris. The Morrises and Griffins are closely affiliated. Since then the two factions have been very bitter, and the enmity has been aroused recently by the White-Baker hostilities. The Philpots, who are the strongest faction in the mountains and number about 750 votes, openly espoused the cause of the Bakers, while the Griffiths took sides with the Whites.

The story that reaches here from Manchester is that Bob Philpot was arrested this morning by Deputy Sheriff Wash Thacker. While very circumstantial in other respects, the report does not show clearly the origin of the trouble nor give the reason for Philpot's arrest. It is said that while Thacker was taking Philpot's bond, the latter was shot from behind by a member of a crowd that had gathered. This precipitated a general fight with Winchesters and revolvers, which was participated in by George Granville, Robert and Peter Philpot and Ed. Fisher on the one side, and Aaron Morris and Hugh, Jim and Green Griffith on the other.

The battle began at about 9 o'clock and continued for ten or fifteen minutes. When it was over it was found that the five mentioned above had been killed outright. Three of the belligerents were seriously wounded, while Pete Philpot was the only one on either side to escape injury. Granville Philpot is said to be one of the most seriously wounded. He is a union veteran, having lost a leg at Stone river. He is an ex-member of the Kentucky legislature, and is said to have killed three or four men.

The story of this battle caused consternation here, notwithstanding the fact that serious trouble has been expected to break out among the mountaineers of Clay county ever since the assassination of Tom Baker several weeks ago. An effort was at once begun to secure deputies to go to the seat of the trouble and attempt to restore quiet, but up to a late hour in the afternoon there had not been enough responses to make up a force that would command respect.

The situation at Manchester is deplorable. Since morning the place has been in a state of terror, scarcely any one daring to venture out of doors. Business is suspended and the residents are momentarily expecting a renewal of hostilities.

EIGHT-HOUR LAW INVALID.

Colorado Court Thus Decides in Case Brought by Mining Interests.

Denver, July 17.—The supreme court to-day unanimously decided the eight-hour law to be unconstitutional. The opinion is not yet written, and will be filed later.

The eight-hour law, which was enacted at a late session of the legislature, applies only to mines, smelters and mills for the reduction of ores. The refusal of the American Smelting and Refining Company to pay the same wages for eight hours as had been paid for ten and twelve hours caused its smelters to be closed on June 15, when the new law became operative.

This company, which is known as the smelter trust, will now endeavor to reach an agreement with its former employees as to wages and hours of labor, and to reopen is smelters as soon as possible.

Officers of the Smeltermen's Union say that furnacemen who formerly worked twelve hours a day, will work but eight in the future.

John R. Wright, president of the Smeltermen's Union, was examined at length to-day regarding the conditions prevailing among the smelter workers, and the causes of the closing of the trust smelter by the members of the United States industrial commission, who are holding sessions in this city. He believed there was no matter so important to laboring men now as the eight-hour day, regardless of questions of wages and all other considerations. He said that before the smelter combination was affected the men never had any difficulty in dealing with the managers and obtaining any concessions desired, but now it was found almost impossible to reach those in authority.

BORN.

M'DOUGALL—In this city, on the 13th inst., the wife of Capt. W. D. McDougall, of a daughter.

(Halifax papers please copy.)

FARMER—In this city, on the 18th inst., the wife of W. Farmer, of a son.

PIERCY—On the 12th instant, the wife of Mr. John Piercy, of a son.

GEROW—On the 12th instant, to the wife of Mr. Gus Gerow, a son.

BUTLER—In this city, on July 13, the wife of F. Butler, of a daughter.

MARRIED.

MOYLE-PETTIT—At St. Paul church, Vancouver, on the 10th July, by the Rev. Harold Underhill, J. R. Moyle, of Victoria, to Agnes A., daughter of J. D. Pettit, of Toronto.

DIED.

COOKSON—At St. Joseph's hospital, on the 13th instant, Estelle H. Cookson, the beloved wife of Cecil H. Cookson, aged 24 years.

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BROWN—At the family residence, Beacon Hill, on the 13th inst., Robert Henry Brown, a native of Yorkshire, England, aged 67 years.

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VICTORIA, B.C.

Fire at the Wharf.—A blaze at the outer wharf which might have resulted seriously was discovered in the nick of time yesterday by A. McCormack, a runner for the Queen's hotel. A passenger arriving on the Empress threw a lighted cigar which fell through the wharf to the planks below and set fire to the wharf. When smoke was first seen issuing from the cracks it was thought that it came from one of the steamers lying alongside and no attention was paid to it, but McCormack soon saw flames and immediately ran for a bucket of water, with which he quenched the fire.

A Cannery Chinaman.—Queue Sing is the name of a wily Mongolian brought to the police station at 12 o'clock last night, charged with obtaining money under false pretences. Ma Chang, manager of the firm of Yee Yick, who make a business of supplying Chinese labor to the canneries, is the complainant. Sing was hired a few days ago to go to work in one of the canneries on the Fraser river, and was given an advance of $28.50 to pay a few bills he owed around town, purchase some clothes and have a little money in his pocket when he left here. He went to the cannery, but refused to go to work, and returned to Victoria on the Rithet last night. Chang, on account of the money he had paid Sing in advance, laid the information with the police to the above effect.