

The Weekly British Colonist
AND CHRONICLE.

Saturday, November 7, 1868.

The Corporation of the City of Victoria.

The excitement of the city election has for the last three weeks entirely engrossed public attention, and we are now within five days of the Municipal election, and at present we have heard nothing from any new candidates for municipal honors. We cannot say that the sanitary condition of the city is any credit to the Corporation, nor can we congratulate that body upon the state in which they are leaving the public thoroughfares at the expiration of their term of office; that there are some active and energetic citizens amongst the present Town Councillors we are well aware, but as a body they have not in any way distinguished themselves beyond their predecessors in office, unfortunately there is an apathy amongst the citizens in respect of public affairs which is detrimental to the progress and prosperity of our city. During elections some excitement can generally be roused, and for a few days political feeling runs high, but there is none of that consistent perseverance in attention to public matters, that is so essential in a young and stirring community like our own; all things are done by fits and starts with us, and there is a reluctance amongst property holders and business men in the city to take a share in public affairs which is much to be regretted. There are many things which ought to have been set going by the Corporation long before this, in former years the want of power was always urged as an excuse for inactivity; the Municipal Ordinance of 1867 gives very ample powers to the Municipality, of which the present Mayor and Council have not availed themselves, as we had hoped and expected they would. One matter of importance, both to the farmers and producers in the adjacent districts, and to the citizens and consumers living in and near the city, is the establishment of a public market; that such an institution is much wanted, there can be very little doubt, and if the Corporation do not bestir themselves, we fully expect to see the matter taken up by a private company. The expense of establishing a market would be small, and the advantages, and consequent profit, would be such as amply to repay those who undertake to set it on foot. To the Corporation there can be no doubt that a market would be a source of revenue in a short time, and in view of the low value of land at present, it seems desirable that no time should be lost in commencing an undertaking which is generally admitted to be much needed. Another matter of equal importance, and of more paramount necessity, so far as public health is concerned, is the establishment of a proper system of drainage for the city, with a liberal supply of water for sanitary purposes as well as for use in case of fire; the necessity of these things has often been pointed out to the Corporation, we allude to them again on the eve of a Municipal election, for the purpose of drawing the attention of all good citizens to the necessity of urging some of the most active and energetic business men amongst them, to come forward in order to inaugurate reform and proper management in Municipal matters, there are many who have time to spare for the public service, and who have energy to take an active part in carrying out improvements in the city, such men should be sought out and brought to the front; it has often been a matter of difficulty to find citizens willing to serve in the Municipal offices, this would probably be otherwise were more interest displayed by the people in matters which affect their comfort and well being, and the health of themselves and their families. We hope that as the population is now thoroughly roused we may see some improvement, some elevation from that depth of apathy, which has hitherto hung like a shroud over public affairs in this city at all

times, except when an election or some other public excitement arouses popular feeling, and calls the energy and public spirit of the citizens into action.

Thursday, Nov. 5.

The Nomination for District No. 2.

The nomination for the whole of the districts took place at the school house, Victoria district, at noon yesterday; there was but a small gathering of electors. Dr. Davis was proposed by the hon J. D. Pemberton and seconded by the hon J. S. Helmcken. Mr. Sebright Green was proposed by Mr. N. M. Hicks and seconded by Mr. H. H. H. The candidates, then, briefly addressed the electors. Dr. Davis expressed himself in favor of retrenchment, in the public expenditure, of an alteration in the constitution of the Council and of responsible Government, and against Confederation; he called upon the electors to make Confederation the issue of the election, as he said, that upon all other points he agreed with the other candidate.

Mr. Green said that Dr. Davis had taken a leaf out of his book, as regards retrenchment, representative institutions and responsible government. With regard to Confederation Mr. Green said it could not be the issue, because he distinctly told the electors that should he be elected to represent them in the Council which was now being selected, and the question of Confederation came before that Council, which was in his opinion very unlikely, he would not vote in favor of it.

The Sheriff then called for a show of hands for the respective candidates, and the number held up for each was even. No poll was demanded on behalf of either candidate and the result would be that a double return must have been made by the Sheriff and the election left entirely to the Governor, thus leaving His Excellency to play out his own farce. However, after the Sheriff and all parties had left the hustings, Dr. Helmcken claimed a poll on behalf of Dr. Davis, when the Sheriff reversed his first decision and declared that a poll would take place on Wednesday, the 11th, November, at the several polling places as amended by him, which would be duly advertised.

IMPORTANT RAILROAD INTELLIGENCE.—A private dispatch from Vancouver, from S. Brown, Esq., states that the contract for the construction of the Puget Sound and Columbia River Railroad has been let, and that the surveyors will leave Vancouver on this (Monday) morning to survey the route. The contractor is possessed of ample means to construct the entire road and is prepared to commence work upon it immediately. Articles of incorporation were filed with Hon E. L. Smith, Secretary of the Territory, on Saturday evening, by Messrs S. G. Reed, Cyrus Olney, S. B. Jones and J. W. Brasse, for another road to Puget Sound, from Portland, connecting with both the Union Pacific and Northern Railroads. This corporation has also adopted the title of "Puget Sound and Columbia River Railroad Company" and contemplates two termini on the Sound; one to be via the Cascade range of mountains, by a branch on the upper Columbia. Three railroad termini are thus secured to the people of Puget Sound.—*Pacific Tribune*, Nov. 2nd.

FROM NEW WESTMINSTER.—The steamer Enterprise from New Westminster with forty passengers, and lower country mails only, arrived last evening. The Sparrowhawk, with His Excellency the Governor and Mrs. Seymour on board, had left New Westminster and arrived at Esquimalt ahead of the Enterprise. The Governor is much improved in health. The *Columbian* says in regard to the Assay Office: "We understand that the miners and traders of Cariboo have petitioned the Governor for the establishment of a branch of the Government Assay office in Cariboo. The immediate cause of this step is, we believe, the action of the Bankers in reducing the price of gold dust one per cent. below what has hitherto been paid for it. We have for some time been of opinion that it might be the duty of the Government to establish such a branch, simply as a protection to the miners; and the circumstance to which we have alluded is well calculated to dissipate any lingering doubt upon the subject." The Assizes will open at New Westminster on the 11th.

OF COURTESY NEWS.—From the Yale Examiner we glean the following: "The nomination at Hope and Yale had taken place. Mr. Havelock was unopposed. The nomination at Lytton would doubtless result in a similar way. A meeting was held at Yale on Thursday evening to hear Mr. Havelock's views. He spoke for an hour. During last week 110,000 lbs of freight were shipped to the interior from Yale. Good pay has been struck on the Similkameen River. A Chinese farmer, Ki Wong, at Lillooet, sowed 480 lbs of wheat on about four and a half acres last spring. He has had thrashed out of it 14,700 pounds, or over fifty bushels to the acre. It is said to be the best wheat grown in the Colony. The ground was manured with a light frost last night. Tender plants and shrubs should be looked to."

UNION HOOK AND LADDER CO.—At a meeting held last evening for the purpose of electing officers for the ensuing year, the following gentlemen were chosen: Foreman, C. E. Bunting; First Assistant, E. Dickson; Second Assistant, H. Forman; Treasurer, E. Gracie; Secretary, W. T. Leigh; Asses, Secretary, O. Hayward; Steward, H. A. Morris. The necessity of a Bucket Brigade was discussed and measures taken to establish the same. The idea was most forcibly suggested at the late fire where buckets were used and which prevented the spread of fire in parts not accessible to the engines.

THE LIZZY HONER.—This little steamer the property of the Telegraph Company, has been laid up since her late accident near San Juan Island, in consequence of having to send to San Francisco for some portion of her machinery. She is now repaired, and made a trial trip under the inspection of Mr. Lamb, yesterday. She will be kept principally at Seattle in future.

THE ADVANCE GUARD OF THE ENGINEERS and workmen for the construction of the Honduras Railroad, have arrived at the Bay of Fonseca, and the road will be complete from ocean to ocean in three years. The great London banking house of Bichselheim & Goldschmidt have the enterprise in hand. The distance across is one hundred and forty-eight miles, and deep and spacious harbors exist at each terminus.

IRON WORK.—A new set of wheels for the locomotive at the Nanaimo coal mine, with wrought iron rims, are now being made at the foundry of Messrs Spratt & Klemmer, each wheel will weigh over 500 lbs. This is the first time wheels with wrought iron rims have been made in the Colony.

BAD BRIDGE.—Attention is again called to the present dangerous condition of the second bridge on the Esquimalt road, which is said to be disgraceful. Perhaps when some serious accident occurs the necessary repairs will be made.

CONGRATULATORY.—President Johnson a few days ago sent a congratulatory letter to Queen Victoria on the birth of a royal grand-daughter, the child of the Princess Helena.—*Tribune*, Nov. 2nd.

EARTHQUAKE.—A slight tremor of an earthquake was felt in the city by several persons at twelve minutes before six o'clock last evening. Frame buildings shook for a second as if a heavy wagon passed close by.

ACCIDENT.—The night before last, at Esquimalt, a buggy accident occurred whereby one of the occupants was somewhat bruised, at the same time, the vehicle belonging to Mr. Dunlop, was injured.

NAVAL.—H. M. S. Zealous was at gun practice in the Straits yesterday. The Sparrowhawk arrived from New Westminster yesterday evening.

Free Trade.

EDITOR COLONIST.—At this time when all questions relating to our welfare might be supposed to meet with attention, there is one which I think has not met with the attention it deserves. I allude to the question of the restoration of our free port. Of the six candidates whose addresses are published in your columns, two allude to the present tariff, and they faintly suggest that it may be desirable to alter it so far as it can be done without diminishing the protection at present afforded to the producers on the Island, a third has made a protest against the enormous duty (more than 25 per cent) on flour; two have ignored the question altogether, while one enlightened gentleman, who aspires to the position of legislator in this nineteenth century, says, that he considers the question of free trade dead and buried. I know there are many professing the principles of free trade who consider it expedient to afford at present some protection to the Island industries. I for one see great difficulty in only partially restoring our free port, but do not think that there is at present any insurmountable difficulty, financial or other, in restoring it entirely, nor do I think that the loss of the protection afforded them by the present tariff would in the end be an injury to the farmer, shut out from all markets beside Victoria and Nanaimo, (I omit the mainland as it must soon become self supporting). It surely is of the first importance to foster the growth of these towns; it is certain that during the last two years under the present system of a protective tariff, the capability of Victoria for consuming agricultural produce has considerably diminished, and it seems to me that while the farmer is growing the corn to feed us, his customer is in danger of starving, and by supporting the present system he is likely to be in the condition of the countryman in the fable who killed the goose which laid

the golden eggs. For how does the present system work? In the first place, it makes Victoria the dearest place to live in on the North Pacific Coast, and our neighbors accustomed to the prices of Portland and San Francisco complain of the charges of our hotels and restaurants. (I think we heard of this last summer) In the next place the weight of the taxes falls principally upon those least able to bear it. The poor man pays nearly the same amount as the rich man, while the man with a large family contributes out of all proportion towards the general revenue. Let all consumers bear in mind that out of every hundred dollars spent in providing the absolute necessities of life, they contribute at least twenty towards the revenue. Let it also be remembered that merchants doing a large business, and the holders of property, pay taxes only on what each individually consumes, and unless they are very self-indulgent contribute no more to the revenue than the poorest man in the colony, while absentee holders of property, whether receiving rents, or holding it as a speculation, pay nothing at all. While considering this, let us at the same time compare our present prospects with those that might fairly be expected under the old free port system; and I think that all will agree with me that even the two candidates who in their addresses have brought the matter of the revision of the tariff most prominently forward, do not at present go far enough. Now let us see what will be the loss to the colony, if the Island is made a free port, and how it can be made up. I think it can be made up very easily, but here I would speak with diffidence, trusting that this matter may be taken up by some one more able than myself. Comparing the amount of goods entered at New Westminster for the quarter ending the twenty-fifth of June 1866, and calculating the duties according to the present tariff; the duties collected at that port before the Union of the colonies amounted to about \$79,600; the duties collected for the united colony in the corresponding quarter of 1868 amounted in round numbers to about \$80,000. The difference between these two amounts may, I think, be fairly taken as an estimate of the proportion of duties borne by this portion of the colony. The amount to be made up is then about \$19,400 per quarter, or say about \$80,000 per annum. Now, in 1866 the revenue derived from landing permits, the real estate tax and trade licenses, amounted to at least \$100,000. Should our free port be restored the Island portion of the revenue must be paid principally by the imposition in some form or other of these taxes; to these might perhaps be added the tax upon salaries, and an inhabited home tax paid by the tenant as in England. From these sources an ample revenue can be derived.

With a reasonable retrenchment in the colonial expenditure, I myself think that by a well digested financial scheme for the whole colony in which the system of direct taxation was recognized as the best fitted to Vancouver Island, the Government would be able so far to increase the general revenue that they might reduce or perhaps totally abolish the road tolls which press heavily upon the most important industry in the colony.

I hope, sir, I have made it as clear to many of your readers as it is to myself, how desirable and feasible a return to the old system of unrestricted trade is at present, and when I add, that it is a reform within our reach, that it is a question that may be calmly debated in Legislative Council by all members, official and unofficial, and can be decided at once by the good sense of the majority, I think I have said enough to show that it is a question which may now be fairly agitated. The importance of the subject must be my excuse for addressing you at such length; I leave the matter now, certain that it will find in Victoria many more able advocates.

FREE TRADE.

[We regret being unable to give the above a place until this morning, it having been handed in several days since.]

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CASCARILLA BARK—For Diarrhoea, Colic and diseases of the stomach and bowels.

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ANISE—An aromatic carminative; creating flesh, muscle and milk; much used by mothers nursing.

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