

TWICE-A-WEEK TIMES.

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ABOUT THE FIRE.

The people of Victoria have had another lesson and warning, unfortunately at considerable pecuniary loss to many who could ill afford such loss and at the cost of a great deal of mental stress and physical suffering to many more. The fire Tuesday started practically in the same neighborhood as the conflagration of two years ago, swept close to the same district, and but for the efforts of the regular corps of firemen and the heroic efforts of the volunteers from the barracks and of citizenship generally and the barrier of that useful open square called Finlayson's fields, the destruction of property would have been much greater. The wind, fortunately on this occasion as previously was in the right quarter. Had it been blowing from any other quarter, except possibly, the north, we are loath to indulge in speculation as to the possible consequences. These are the facts. In dwelling upon them no good purpose can be effected by indulgence in hysterical recrimination and endeavoring to place responsibility upon the present Mayor and Council. Let us consider the situation calmly with a view to the possible contingencies of the future.

The shortage of water was not as prominent a feature of the case as it was at the time of the previous outbreak of fire in the same locality two years ago. We believe this statement will be borne out by the Water Commissioner and by the pressure record of the gauges. This notwithstanding the fact that during the period which has elapsed, a large number of new water services have been installed as a result of the rapid growth of the city. Consequently it is apparent that the city officials and the corporation have endeavored to do all in their power to meet such a crisis as that of Tuesday with the facilities at their command. From time to time tentative proposals have been made by the Board of Aldermen designed to increase the supply of water from Elk Lake; but such suggestions have been vetoed by the ratepayers on various grounds, principally because they believed the demands of the city had outgrown the capacity of the present source of supply and it was considered inadvisable to spend more money on the property. Not a few people, also, have openly proclaimed their lack of faith in the present executive head of the council and just as openly avowed their determination to exercise all the power they possessed in circumventing his schemes.

We believe the foregoing to be an accurate epitome of the civic situation in respect to the water supply. It is all very well to dogmatically assert we must have more water, and that we must have it immediately; but the fact is so plain as to need no demonstration that the force of water in the mains cannot be increased immediately under any circumstances unless the pumps at present installed at Elk Lake prove sufficiently effective for the purpose. If we go to the Highland District, to Goldstream, or to Sooke Lake, any of these works will take a year—possibly two years—to complete. Consequently, if we are going to place responsibility anywhere, we must go back beyond the term of the present council and saddle it upon administrations which had not the foresight to perceive the pressing necessities of the future.

In the height of the excitement Tuesday and as a natural result of the indignation engendered by the apparent helplessness of the mere human element in the face of an element much more powerful when out of human control, it is not a matter for surprise that execrations were hurled in all directions at the city councils, past and present, for their lack of foresight; and at the legislatures, past and present, for permitting private corporations to grasp water privileges which ought to have been reserved for this municipality; at the alleged greed of a private company for making exorbitant demands; even at the firemen for their apparent lack of effective organization and systematic effort to prevent the spread of the flames instead of wasting the water available in puny attempts to save buildings manifestly doomed to destruction. But now that all such "brain storms" have subsided, let us consider the situation calmly and temperately decide upon preventive measures for the future. If it be necessary to secure expert advice in order to overcome divided councils, let us have it regardless of cost—and let us

also carry out whatever recommendations are made without regard to cost. Let the menace be removed with all the celerity possible.

MR. BOWSER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

Mr. Bowser has been sworn in as Attorney-General in the McBride government. The new minister, it is claimed by the organs of the administration, will add to its strength in the Legislature and in the country. We are not disposed to attempt to gainsay this. The government has been proven to be lamentably weak in debate, and while the eloquence of the new Attorney-General is not of the type that appeals to men of sober thought, the responsibilities of office may have a ripening effect upon it, and a sobering effect upon the thought back of it—that is, providing Mr. Bowser has developed into a thinking man. Some of the speeches of the hon. gentleman have created doubts upon this point. However, there is no question that he is very popular in this constituency and that there are substantial reasons for this unquestioned popularity. He is a loyal Vancouverite and a hard worker in his interests.

When the announcement was made that Mr. Bowser would be sworn in just as soon as the Premier returned from his mission to the foot of the throne, coupled with the announcement was a statement to the effect that under no circumstances—possibly short of promotion to the premiership—would he condescend to reside in Victoria. His extensive legal practice and his large interests in general, we were told, would preclude a change of residence. That announcement has not been contradicted or amended. The position of Mr. Bowser, it appears to us, is unique. It is the custom in the Dominion of Canada and in all the provinces of the Dominion, for ministers to reside at the capital, because only by such residence can they attend to the duties of the departments of which they have charge. Mr. Aylesworth, a gentleman probably of as high standing in his profession as Mr. Bowser, surrendered a practice in Toronto worth, it has been estimated, from twenty-five to fifty thousand dollars a year, and took up his residence in Ottawa when he became Minister of Justice in the government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. All great men when they enter the service of their country are compelled to make sacrifices of that kind. Of course we can appreciate the position of the new Attorney-General. We understand the sacrifices he would make on the altar of duty to the province if he were to comply with official requirements—the great change from the throbbing life of the "village on the inlet" to the serene placidity of the capital. Still the experience of other cabinet ministers who have undertaken to administer portfolios at long range should convince him, as it has convinced others, that such efforts do not work well in practice. The fact that some of his new colleagues have spent a great deal of their time abroad than in devotion to the duties of their office cannot be considered as a precedent governing the case. Therefore, unless the new Attorney-General intends that the capital should come to him as he cannot come to it, we fear it will be necessary for the Premier, who has solemnly promised to do something for Victoria, to take the hon. gentleman aside and administer some wholesome advice on the disadvantages of narrow-mindedness and prejudice, and shall we also say, selfishness.

At the same time, we desire our senior representative to distinctly understand that if he should succeed in convincing Mr. Bowser that his habit of making himself at the capital, such a great concession could by no means be considered a redemption of his promise to "do something for Victoria." While we have a very high opinion of the new Attorney-General, that opinion is not sufficient exalted to admit that, believing given us Mr. Bowser, all the obligations of the government to Victoria have been cancelled.

WATER SUPPLY.

In the light of recent experiences there is some satisfaction in the information gathered from our exchanges that Victoria is not the only city on the Pacific Coast, or on the continent at large for that matter, that is perplexed about the insufficiency or inadequacy of water supply. New Westminster is short also, so short indeed that it has been deemed advisable to entirely prevent the sprinkling of lawns and gardens. Our neighbors, we understand, are reserving their water supply entirely for domestic and fire-fighting purposes. Vancouver is in a somewhat better position, but even there, although time has been taken by the forelock and there are no legal complications, an increased flow of water must shortly be provided. Seattle has been wrestling with the water problem also, and there a temporary solution has been found in the curtailment of sprinkling privileges. The same conditions prevail in Spokane, Washington, and in Toronto, Ontario. In fact, they are to be found in every rapidly growing city on the continent, almost. It has been urged, possibly with some reason, that if the newspapers had not opposed the proposal to lay a main of large capacity to Elk Lake earlier in the season, as there is apparently an abundance of water in the reservoir, the conditions complained of at the present time could not have obtained. But the obvious answer to

such criticism of the conduct of the press is that even if that proposal had been adopted by the ratepayers the thirty-inch main could not have been constructed and laid in time to meet the emergency of to-day. The people of Victoria, in the light of the recommendations of acknowledged authorities, with reference to the capacity of Elk Lake, had made up their minds to sink any more of their money in improvements to the present system, would have been simply to impair the municipal credit in view of the imperative necessity of going to a larger source of supply. We have had another lesson. It is for the council to apply it. Nothing in the direction of increasing the supply of water can be accomplished for some time. But means can be devised of making the most of the supply available. We can do as New Westminster and Seattle have done. We can prevent all waste, as a safeguard against contingencies.

IMPRESSED WITH THE ISLAND.

VICE PRESIDENT OF C. P. R. IS DELIGHTED.

D. McNicholl Says Company Will Aid in Development—No Decision on Alberni Line.

"You have wonderful resources here on Vancouver Island. I am impressed with the great future which must be in store for it. Since I last visited the Island, two years ago, I see a marvelous change in it."

These words were spoken to a Times reporter to-day by D. McNicholl, first vice-president of the C. P. R., who returned last evening from a trip across Vancouver Island.

Mr. McNicholl, in company with Mr. Marpole, general executive assistant on the coast; D. E. Brown and other C. P. R. officials left here on Sunday by the steamer City of Nanaimo, to what he had seen on Vancouver Island, the route of the projected extension of the railway was inspected.

Last evening they returned to the city by private car, the latter, who spent the night here, leaving again at noon to-day for Vancouver.

Mr. McNicholl was delighted with his trip and spoke most enthusiastically of the development of the immense timber resources and the opening up of the arable lands he felt assured meant a great future for the Island. He was delighted with the splendid timber which was passed on the way.

The C. P. R. he said would do its part in the development of the district. Asked with reference to the extension of the E. & N. R., McNicholl said that nothing definite had been decided yet. The executive had the matter still in hand. There was much information to be got before a final decision was reached, and surveys were being made to work covering the ground.

On account of the long continued hot weather, McNicholl said, what was to be done in connection with giving a line to Cowichan Lake. He said this was also under consideration. Information was being got from all parts of the Island but by surveying the cruisers and others. He had not gone into Cowichan Lake, but had heard from those who had been in that there was a wealth of timber there.

The opening of the hotel was being delayed, he said, unavoidably, but good time was being made. It would not be a few months before the hotel was ready. The intention was to have the work done well and the company would endeavor to have the building well filled.

THE HAYWOOD TRIAL.

Attorney Darrow Attacks Orchard and Leading Counsel for the State.

Boise, Idaho, July 24.—Clarence Darrow, of Chicago, for two and a half hours of the morning session of the Haywood trial, proclaimed the innocence of his client and the impossibility of his conviction upon the uncorroborated evidence of Orchard, J. H. Hawley, leading counsel for the state, and Orchard were clashed almost daily, and there have been frequent exchanges of angry words, until during this morning Darrow vented his accumulated wrath. There was no attempt at refinement of attack; it was straight vituperation and angry denunciation. For two hours and a half Darrow rang the changes on Orchard's past, his present and his future, and on Orchard he heaped every word of abuse and contempt that the least possible show of respect for the court would permit.

The courtroom, crowded to its limit, was hot, but the Chicago lawyer held his audience to close attention through the morning. He pleads with voice and gestures. Not quite so much for a moment, he paced to and fro before the box, addressing each of the jurors in turn and always pleading that an Idaho jury should never find a verdict against Haywood on the testimony of Orchard, who, he said, was corroborated only by a dog, a well-known horse, and the argument of the morning said that if the jury of Idaho men would "hang Bill Haywood, one million willing hands will seize the state of liberty by the open grave and bear it on to victory."

It was stated during the hearing of a case, which resulted in the conviction of seven people were found sleeping in a bed.

APRICOTS ARE AT THEIR BEST SEASON FOR FRUIT A VERY SHORT ONE.

Advance in Butter Which is High for This Season of the Year.

Apricots will undoubtedly be much less plentiful this summer than for many seasons past, and those who desire this fruit for preserving purposes should get their supply at once. This shortage is due to the extreme brevity of the apricot crop. Unlike apples and pears, which are practically all at once, and within a week or two from the time that news is received from Oregon that they are ready for the local market, the crop is practically over. Shipments are expected at the end of this week and in order to receive satisfaction orders should be filed at once.

Logan berries, a fruit unexcelled for preserving purposes and especially for the making of jelly, are now at the lowest prices and the quality is of the best. Preserving raspberries are now at their best and will soon be on the rise. Butter has again gone up the island produce being now 40c. a pound and the possibility is that before long it will have advanced to 50c. For this time of year this is a most extraordinary state of affairs, the usual price of butter at this season, for many years past, being about 30c. There are several explanations offered for this undue advance. On account of the long continued hot dry season, resulting in the extremely poor grass crop, the cows have practically been left to themselves, naturally resulting in a material decrease in the supply of milk. Another explanation is that with the necessary number of people continually coming into the city and the whole island, all requiring food, there is a great provision being made for supplying the necessary demand. In a great many cases cattle farms are being sold and subdivided either into building sites or small fruit farms.

Naval oranges are now off the market, as are local asparagus and California peaches.

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Apples (Cal.), per lb.	15
Oranges, per doz.	40
Oranges (navel), per doz.	35
Cherries, per lb.	15
New Jordan Almonds (shell- ed), per lb.	75
Valencia Almonds (shell- ed), per lb.	50
Valencia Raisins, per lb.	12
Strawberries, per lb.	15
Sultana Raisins, per lb.	15
Pineapples, each	50
Coast Oil	1.50
Pratt's Coal Oil	1.70
Scoone	1.70

WHOLESALE MARKET.	
Onions (California), per lb.	6
Carrots, per 100 lbs.	3.00
Bananas, per bunch	3.50
Lemons	5.00
Walnuts, per lb.	140
Oranges (Seedling), per lb.	3.50
Oranges (Valencia), per lb.	5.00
Figs (Cal.), per lb.	75
Fig Figs, per lb.	15
Grapes, per lb.	4.00
Apples, per box	2.50
Pineapples, per doz.	3.00
Grape Fruit, per box	2.50
Comb Honey, per lb.	20
Cabbage, per lb.	10
Eggs (ranch), per doz.	30
Butter (Creamery), per lb.	30
Butter (Dairy), per lb.	20
Hay, per ton	17.00
Oats, per ton	32.00
Barley, per ton	30.00
Corn, per ton	32.00
Cucumbers	1.00
Tomatoes	2.50
Apricots	1.40
Peaches	1.50
Pistons	2.25

INQUIRIES MADE IN TRADE LINES.

Foreign Houses Wish to Enter Into Commercial Relations With British Columbia Firms.

In the latest of the weekly reports from commercial agents representing Canada in various parts of the world are a number of inquiries of interest to business men in British Columbia. These reports are published weekly by the Dominion government under the department of trade and commerce.

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THE SINKING OF STEAMER COLUMBIA.

STATEMENT BY MATE OF THE SAN PEDRO.

Did All He Could to Avoid A Collision—The Work of Rescue.

Eureka, Cal., July 24.—From Ben Henderson, first mate on the San Pedro, who was on the bridge at the time of the collision at midnight on Saturday with the Columbia, the following version of how the collision and wreck occurred has been obtained:

"It was about ten or fifteen minutes past 12 o'clock Sunday morning when the lookout, E. Soderberg, told me that there was a whistle ahead on the port bow, and I ported the helm a couple of points. As the sound came nearer I told the man at the wheel to port the helm again. I continued to sound the fog signal. The approaching vessel answered the fog signal. Then came two blasts of the Columbia's whistle. When I saw the lights on the Columbia I gave four rapid blasts of the whistle—that is the danger signal. The danger signal, because I gave the engine two bells to stop before giving the four whistles. The Columbia was crossing the San Pedro's bow. The San Pedro struck the Columbia on the starboard side about twenty-five or thirty feet from the bow. The Columbia was not very far away when I first saw her lights, and when I saw the lights I blew the whistle. I had done all I could for us to starboard the helm. Our only salvation was to port the helm, which I did."

Capt. Jensen's Statement.

Astoria, July 24.—Capt. Jensen of the Elder, which arrived here to-day with a number of the survivors of the steamer Columbia, made the following statement to the Associated Press concerning his part in the Columbia-San Pedro disaster:

"When the Elder arrived on the scene of the disaster the Columbia had already gone down, and the deck of the San Pedro was awash. Our first work was to pick up as many of the survivors as we could from the rafts and boats of the Columbia. The water was pretty smooth and the fog just lifting. This was about six in the morning."

"We did all we could for the poor people, and succeeded in saving many lives, as you already know. When we had done all we could we made ready to take the San Pedro in tow. This was a difficult task, and once the San Pedro broke away from us. Finally everything was made fast and we towed her into Eureka. The San Pedro had as many on board as she could safely carry."

The representative of the Associated Press made a careful canvass among the survivors, and the exception of the rescued say the officers and crew could not have been more kind. They did everything possible in the work of rescue, fitted all they could with temporary clothing, and prepared food and eatables for the freezing people.

San Pedro Waterlogged.

Eureka, Cal., July 23.—The San Pedro now lies near the Holmes Eureka lumber mill southward of the Bendixson shipyard. She is so badly waterlogged, her cutwater is badly battered, her mainmast broken in two and forward masts all open. In the bow on one side is lodged a piece of the Columbia sheeting two feet long, six inches wide, also a number of smaller pieces from four to six inches in length, all of which were wedged into the wood as closely as if placed there by construction. The vessel is in control of men placed there by orders from C. P. Doe, of the North Pacific Steamship Company. It would appear that this company claims the ship.

Capt. Hansen, of the San Pedro, consulted with attorneys for the Metropolitan Lumber Company, to which the San Pedro belongs, and it is more than likely that an attempt will be made to get possession of her to-day.

Whether a law suit will result remains to be seen. If the case cannot be amicably settled, it will probably be taken into court.

Mr. Atkinson, of the Metropolitan Lumber Company, stated to-night that in his opinion the North Pacific Steamship Company had no right to the San Pedro. He was asked if a claim for towing would be paid immediately upon its presentation to the Metropolitan company. He replied that the company would pay any claim that was reasonable for services rendered in towing. Officers of the Elder claim that Capt. Hansen had come aboard the Elder with all his men, stating that he was afraid the San Pedro would turn over, and declared that Captain Hansen had abandoned the lumber schooner.

Police Chief on Trial.

Is Accused of Accepting Bribes From A Band of Crooks.

Salt Lake City, July 23.—Chief of Police George A. Sheets appeared in Justice Bishop's court to-day to answer to the charge of accepting a bribe of \$1,500 from a band of crooks to allow them to work their card and other swindling games in Salt Lake City unmolested. The complaint was given out by Deputy Sheriff J. C. Sharp. This is the third time Sheets has been hauled into court on similar charges, all of which grew out of the fleeing of the McWhirter brothers of \$10,000 a gang of swindlers in a poker game in the Antler rooming house in this city last September.

The case was continued till next Tuesday morning because of absence of one of Sheets' counsel. Sheets is under \$500 bail.

JAPANESE SHIPS AT BREST.

Bluejackets Not Allowed to Land—Americans Denied Shore Leave.

Brest, July 24.—The Japanese cruisers Tsukuba and Chitose, under the command of Vice-Admiral Ijima, arrived in this harbor this morning. While entering, the visiting warships sailed the fort with twenty-one guns and at their swing around to drop anchor near the American cruisers. Washington and Tennessee, the Tennessee, a ship of Rear-Admiral Stockton, visited the Japan division with 15 guns. The salute was returned. Immediately after the exchange of salutes the Japanese naval attaché at Paris, Captain Miyama, boarded the Tsukuba and conferred with Vice-Admiral Ijima. About half an hour later the Japanese Vice-Admiral left the Tsukuba and came ashore for a round of official visits. The crews of the Japanese cruisers are to be kept on board until the next order and the American bluejackets also have been denied shore leave.

Rear-Admiral Stockton explains that these restrictions are customary on the day before leaving port.

RESULTS IN THE SUB HIGH SCHOOL.

Promotion Lists in the City Where Work in This Department is Done.