The Colonist.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1898.

FUTURE OF VICTORIA.

The future of Victoria is full of promise. Every one will be glad to read a statement like this, but most people will be more pleased to know why it is made and what foundation there is for it.

The reason for making it is that an impression is being spread abroad that Victoria has reached the height of its commercial prosperity and that hereafter it must be content with such advancement as will be derived from its exceptional advantages as a residential city. It is surprising to what a degree Victoria is misunderstood. Few even of our own people appreciate the volume of business transacted here and the importance of the commercial interests of which this is the centre. A very pronounced and successful effort is now being made to boom Vancouver, and with excellent reason, for no one disputes the claims of the Mainland city as a commercial point. Coupled with this effort is a systematic depreciation of Victoria, which we believe is more the result of a misunderstanding of the exact situation than anything else. Victoria's advantages as a residential city are very great, but they form only an addition to its importance and advantages as a business point. In the beauty of its surroundings and its delightful climate, our city has attractions that must lead to its being selected by people of means and some leisure, whose interests or tastes lead them to prefer life on the Coast, but beyond all this Victoria has equal commercial advantages with any other point in the Pacific Northwest, and these ought to be kept prominently forward.

The foundation upon which we build our anticipations for a successful business future for Victoria, and one not very far remote, is three fold, namely, the development of Vancouver Island, the opening of the mining districts in Northwestern British Columbia and the permanent expansion of the Yukon trade.

The development of the Island: This is now in progress in such a way that we may reasonably expect next year to begin to see the good results. The mining operations being carried on along the West Coast and at Mount Sicker appear likely very soon to assume extensive proportions. It is worth while remembering that a single mine caused a city to grow up at Rossland. It would be premature to compare any mine now being developed on the Island with the Le Roi, but in view of the fact that there will likely be several producing mines next year contributory to this city, the reasons for feeling encouraged at the outlook seem sufficient. With the progress of mining will come the settlement of the numerous and very excellent tracts of farming land adjacent to the mineral deposits. Thus without looking far into the future or taking into consideration anything at all problematical, we have good grounds upon which to base most encouraging anticipations. While speaking of the future of the Island, the probable abolition of the sealing industry must not be lost sight of. Sealing is peculiarly a Vancouver Island industry, and if it must be sacrificed for Imperial reasons something ought to be done to compensate the Island for the loss. Among the ideas which suggest themselves in this connection, railway extension and improved connection with the Mainland are prominent. The business men and property owners of Victoria should consult as to what they ought to ask from the Federal and Imperial governments in consideration of the sacrifice of sealing.

The opening of the Atlin district will afford a field for the energy of the Victoria business men, and they have just as good facilities for occupying it as any of their rivals can possibly have. This district is in British Columbia, and it is preposterous to suppose that United States merchants will be allowed to secure its trade. Victoria houses can, and we feel sure will, occupy the field, and Victoria people will have a share in the wealth which will be produced there. This is also true of the district intersected by the Stikine. We will hear very much more about this next year. The past season was one of disappointment. The failure of the Mackenzie-Mann railway bargain upset all calculations and gave the whole region a set-back. Nevertheless considerable has been accomplished. The Cassiar Central Railway Company has taken initiatory steps towards the exploitation of its concession, and the probability is that during next summer this company will be much more active than in the past. In whatever business there may be built up along the Stikine and its tributaries, Victoria is certain to have a large share, for the merchants of this city have always shown themselves able to hold their own against all comers.

So far as the business of the Yukon is concerned, if we continue to have the same relative share of the supply trade in the future that we have enjoyed this year, there will be no cause for complaint. There is reason to suppose that we will have a larger share. As the Colonist pointed out a year ago, the outfitting business will come pretty well to an end with 1898. Miners and prospectors will not in the majority of cases buy outfits before going North. They will go into the country light and purchase the heavier articles necessary after they get there. Heretofore it was foolish for a man to think of venturing into the Yukon unless he could take a year's supplies with him. This will not be necessary next season, because there will be supply depots at convenient points at which goods will be sold at reasonable prices. Victoria can get a large share of this business.

We have not thought it necessary to refer to the possibility of increasing the city's trade with Kootenay, but it must not be lost sight of. A great deal of business is done in that direction now by Victoria houses and we see no reason why it should not expand. There will be growth all along the line during the next five years, and the business capacity and excellent standing of the people of this city will enable Victoria to keep its place in any competition which may arise.

The one great requisite of the situation is improved transportation facilities in all directions. We are not disposed to join with those who find fault with existing arrangements. It is so much easier to complain than to point out a remedy. Our idea is that the transportation problem should never for one moment be lost sight of by our people. It is the one great problem of the hour. Let our facilities in this respect be perfected and Victoria will be as progressive in a business point of view as any other place on the Northwest Coast. Transportation should be the chief subject to engage the attention of Victorians. It should be the theme of frequent discussion. However much we may differ on other matters, we should make common cause on this one. With the progress and expansion that is going on all around us, and with the exceptional recommendations of our city as a residential point, give us good transportation facilities, and Victoria will stride forward at a pace unequalled by anything in her past history. The future looks bright with hope, which the solution of the transportation problem will reduce to a certainty.

RECIPROCITY.

Senator Macdonald writes the Colonist a letter, urging that some expression should be given to the views of the people of British Columbia in regard to the commodities in which they are willing there should be free interchange between Canada and the United States. The idea is a good one, because when the Anglo-American commission resumes its sessions, this is one of the matters that will be dealt with. The questions which will govern the adjustment of a reciprocity treaty are necessarily local. When some twenty years ago General Hancock, replying to a delegation which called to ask his views in regard to the tariff, on the eve of the presidential campaign, replied, "The tariff is a local issue." The observation cost him the presidency, but there was much truth in it, as events have since demonstrated. The tariff is both a national and a local question. The general lines upon which a schedule of duties shall be framed necessarily form a national issue; the application of those lines to commodities is usually a local matter. For example: In British Columbia we are all desirous of seeing agriculture developed. No industry promises more direct gain to the province than this, for it will ensure profitable employment at home for a large number of people, and retain a great deal of money in the country that is now sent abroad. The free importation of agricultural produce will interfere with the expansion of our agriculture. We have no surplus to sell California or the Sound, while both those portions of the United States have a surplus which they can sell us. We can very readily understand that a different condition exists on the Atlantic side of the Dominion. For example, the Maritime Provinces and Quebec have immense quantities of hay and potatoes, which can be sold at a great advantage in the United States. Much of the surplus of these articles is now sold there, notwithstanding the heavy duty. On the other hand, the states adjoining the Eastern provinces have no agricultural produce, or comparatively little, that they can sell in Canada. So in regard to mutton. Eastern Canadian mutton is much sought after by American buyers, notwithstanding the duty. On this Coast we buy most of our mutton in Oregon and Washington. It is clear that the interests of the two sections of the Dominion are radically divergent in regard to the free interchange of farm produce. We may feel assured that the Eastern interests are making themselves heard at Ottawa, and it is only right that British Columbia should not remain unrepresented. If we make known the position in which reciprocity in farm produce will place the farmers of British Columbia, even if we do not succeed in protecting them, we may succeed in securing some compensation. In any view of the case, it is desirable that action should be taken along the line suggested by Senator Macdonald.

On the other hand, there are articles in which we all desire to see a free interchange. Coal is one of these. In this respect we will have the co-operation of the coal mine owners of Nova Scotia, and we assume that the influence of California would be thrown in our favor. On the other hand, the state of Washington will strenuously oppose any measure which admits our coal into open competition with the products of its mines, and the coal interests of the Middle States will fight any arrangement which will admit the output of Nova Scotia, although the Ontario market would be some compensation to them for any loss they might sustain in the New England market. British Columbia desires the free admission of lead ore and lead into the United States. To secure this, we may be called upon to surrender something.

The difficulties surrounding the questions are many, and can only be adjusted by compromise. The very essence of reciprocity is the giving of something by one party in consideration of the giving of something by the other, and it is entirely to the interest of British Columbia that there should be, at a very early day, a strong and representative expression of what we, as a people, desire to get, and what we are willing to give.

THE WAR SCARE.

As the Colonist suggested yesterday, it is likely that the two governments concerned will find a safe and honorable way of disposing of the Fashoda question. In view of the fact that General Kitchener's force is now in control of the Bahr el Ghazal, the absurdity of any claim on the part of France to a post on the Nile east of that province becomes apparent. Great Britain would simply make a laughing stock of herself to concede such a ludicrous pretension, and we are sure that no one will see this more quickly than the French government. The assertion of some of the French papers that France must have a right of access to the Nile cannot be defended. Granting that geographically a country holding the mouth of a river may claim territory all the way to its source, in the absence of its occupation by another power, it cannot be successfully contended that a post on the Nile is appurtenant to the control of the Congo. The evening despatches said that France might be granted "way leave" and "enclave," but the telegrapher did not make the meaning of this very clear. "Way leave" means the right of way; "enclave" means a piece of territory completely shut in by the territory of another power. The meaning of the suggestion is that a point may be selected somewhere in the Bahr el Ghazal district and be given to France, accompanied with the right-of-way to it. This would be the same as if it were proposed to settle the Alaskan boundary dispute by giving the United States a piece of territory on the Yukon and permission to go to it without interference from the Canadian customs. Whether this or some other solution of the difficulty will be adopted, we feel very sure that there is not the least danger of war over Fashoda.

ILL-ADVISED ENTERPRISE

The Colonist has been asked by several people to say something in regard to the sensational story which appeared in the Times on Monday night, in regard to preparations for war alleged to be in progress at Esquimalt. We do not like as a rule to interfere with the affairs of any newspaper, but we suggest to our contemporary that it is desirable to avoid anything of the kind referred to in future. Just at this particular time there is a disposition on the part of investors to place money in British Columbia properties, and the publication of alarmist stories is likely to lead them to pause. Every one knows that even a temporary interruption of financial negotiations is likely to prove prejudicial to success. A business proposition may be in a fair way to be consummated, when something arises to cause a halt in negotiations, and this halt may prove fatal for reasons that no one can foresee. One of the Colonist's callers mentioned a case in which the story published by the Times had already produced an injurious effect, although he hoped, he said, that the telegraphic news in this paper yesterday would dispel any fears that had been excited. War is bad enough and would upset business badly enough, if it actually occurred, and it is not wise to raise needless alarm.

MR. WADE'S VENTURES.

Rumor credits ex-Prosecuting Attorney Wade, of Yukon, with having made a good deal of money during his short stay at Dawson. We have no information on the subject, and what he may have made in a fair way is his own business, and no one else's. A statement made by Mr. Livingstone, late of the Klondike Miner, suggests that Mr. Wade may have been furnished with exceptional opportunities to make money and if this is so, while his profits may have been legal, it was not fair to others that he should have been allowed to make them. Mr. Livingstone says that Mr. Wade's firm had notice in advance of some two hundred claims, which were to be thrown open to relocation because of the failure of the first locators to do their assessment work. If this is the case, some one was very much to blame. We are not finding fault with Mr. Wade for taking advantage of information obtained in advance of anyone else. We suppose few people would not do the same thing. His position as prosecuting attorney may have given him facilities for obtaining such information. We do not know about this. If it did, there can be no difficulty in ascertaining the fact, and if so, and if he used such information to his personal advantage, he did a very culpable thing, although it is probably too late now to do anything about it. If he obtained his advance information through favor of the gold commissioner or any of his subordinates, the fault lies elsewhere and should be dealt with in some appropriate manner. The suggestion which naturally occurs to anyone in this connection is that there was at Dawson an official ring which profited by inside information. This is a point into which the most searching inquiry should be made. It is really one of the main causes of complaint, and we would not be doing justice to the ministers themselves if we did not add that the names of some of them have been very freely mentioned in connection with such a combination. They owe it to themselves to remove any suspicion of ministerial connivance at the wrongs perpetrated by officials at Dawson.

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IMPROVEMENT OF LIVE STOCK:

We are glad to see the Vancouver World calling attention to the necessity of improving the live stock of the province. There are some elementary propositions in stock-raising that ought not to be lost sight of. One of them is that it costs no more to keep a good animal than it does to keep a poor one. Another is that good animals are marketable when inferior ones cannot be disposed of. British Columbia ought to be a paradise for draught horses and beef cattle. Such observations as we have been able to make at provincial fairs forces the conclusion that very much remains to be done in the way of improving both these lines of stock. Roadsters are necessarily not in much demand in a province where there are not many good country roads and where driving for pleasure is yet not much practiced. The exception is Victoria and its vicinity, where the roads are excellent, but not much interest is taken here in breeding roadsters, the most of those who keep horses for domestic use being content with something that is showy and safe. The majority of Victorians seem yet to learn what pleasure there is in driving a fast stepping pair over a good road, such as can be found almost anywhere leading out of the city.

In draught horses three classes are most in favor in the East, the Clydesdale, the Percheron and the Shire. Of these the Percheron is the best established breed, the Clydesdales come next and the Shires last. By best established we mean that the breed has been longer maintained pure than the others. What we ordinarily call a Percheron is properly a Norman-Percheron, and is the product of breeding between the stocky, sturdy and active horses of La Perche in France and the heavy and sluggish stock known as the Flanders breed. The large dapple greys, with which we are all familiar, that is the stock which is traced to the importations made by Dunham of Illinois, are all Norman-Percherons. The true Percheron is a smaller horse than the cross-bred, but he is very strong and active. His feet are always well formed, wherein he differs from the others. His legs are flat and he usually stands with his feet well under him. Easily kept and gentle, it is hard to find anything better than a pure bred Percheron for draught purposes. It is worth mentioning in this connection that a Percheron stud book is of very little value, so far as it relates to imported animals. The book was started a few years ago in response to the American demand for certified pedigrees. The Percheron is a very ancient breed of horses and has been inbred in La Perche ever since the Crusades.

The Clydesdale is a comparatively modern breed. It grew up in the Clyde valley during the last hundred years and was due to the judicious selection of sires and good nourishment upon excellent pasture. A century has sufficed to evolve a type of animal that faithfully reproduces its characteristics in each succeeding generation. Some of the Clydesdale families are as active as the true Percheron, but the majority of them are less so. A first class Clydesdale is probably unsurpassed in the world as a draught horse.

The Shires have not long been recognized as an independent family. In point of fact they are the old English cart horses and it is only within the last twenty-five years that any effort has been made to preserve pedigrees, while the stud book is even newer. Strength is the distinguishing feature of the Shire horse. As a rule he is sluggish in his movements. He thrives best in a climate like that of the coast of British Columbia, wherein he differs from the Clydesdale, which, like the Ayrshire stock of cattle, seems to do well anywhere.

Excellent results are obtained by crossing these breeds, but it is not desirable to select cross-bred sires. It is a safe rule to follow in breeding all kinds of stock that the sire should be pure bred in his line. Many disappointments result from disregard of this principle. But important as the breeding of animals is, the question of feeding is scarcely secondary. The best types of the leading breeds are the products not only of careful selection, but of judicious feeding. Farmers in all parts of the world have constantly to be reminded that without good feed and care it is hopeless to expect good results from good breeding. Indeed highly bred stock suffers more from neglect than any other, while even very common-bred animals will, if well handled, produce excellent results. There is always a good demand for good draught horses, and nowhere in Canada can they be raised more cheaply than in Western British Columbia. We are therefore glad to join with our Vancouver contemporary in urging this subject upon the attention of farmers. We shall speak of the different varieties of cattle in another article.

TO-NIGHT'S MEETING.

We do not feel it to be necessary to more than remind citizens that to-night the much-talked-of public meeting will be held in the City Hall for the discussion of municipal matters.

Very much interest has been aroused and we are hopeful that the beginning of a genuine reform will be made.

Some correspondents have referred to the occasion as "Col. Prior's meeting." It is no more Col. Prior's than it is any one else's. All he has done has been to set the ball in motion. He will doubtless be prepared to make some suggestions; but let it not be forgotten that it is a citizens' meeting.

A man, who is soon to be hanged in California for the murder of his brother, says he is resigned, and is now content that God shall punish him as he deserves in the next world. Suppose he had not been content, what then?

THE CUBAN DEBT.

A strong effort is being made to induce the United States to assume the Cuban debt, and it is said that a knot of financiers in Paris are prepared to pay handsomely if they can induce the United States commissioners to agree to such an arrangement. As there is not the least probability that the American senate would assent to any treaty containing such a provision, the only object this coterie can have in pressing the case is to make a margin by turning the bonds over, pending the rejection of the treaty. No good reason can be suggested why the United States should assume this debt. The loan was not contracted by Cuba or for the benefit of Cuba. The money was borrowed by the government of Spain and for the purposes of Spain. Most of it was expended in the vain effort to suppress rebellion in the island. If the islanders had regained their independence by their own efforts, they would not have been under any obligation to assume the debt. Indeed, one of the reasons why they were in revolt was that they were burdened with taxes, which in part went to pay interest upon this debt. To ask that they should continue to submit to this burden, or that another country should assume it, is absurd in the last degree. If the money had been spent in internal improvements, that would be quite another matter, but not a dollar of it went in this way.

FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN.

The resignation of the French government introduces a new feature into the Fashoda affair. There will be some delay, and perhaps delay is not undesirable. During the last few days there have been signs that the temper of the French people was becoming more moderate, and the more the question is considered, the more likelihood there is of a decision that the claims first put forward as to the rights derived from Marchand's expedition must be abandoned as untenable. Any ministry taking office in France under existing conditions will find itself greatly hampered as to its foreign policy by the unsettled state of things at home. It is true that a foreign war has been before now the resort of French statesmen in times of domestic discord, but there is no leader in evidence, whom the country would be disposed to follow with confidence in such a policy. The contrast with Great Britain at this crisis is remarkable. The British people present a united front. Salisbury has behind him the whole Empire. The last penny and the last man are at his disposal, if required, to defend the national honor. If war should come and reverses should occur, there would be no reason for the British government to fear popular uprisings. On the contrary, no one knows better than the French government that, if any great disaster should befall the fleet, the life of the republic would not be worth an hour's purchase.

A war with France would be almost exclusively a naval affair. There is practically nothing which the French army could do as long as the British navy controlled the ocean. The superiority of the British navy over that of France is so great that, barring accidents, a conflict between them would be as one-sided as that between the United States and Spain. The French people are not blind to this, and they will not be in haste to risk the loss of their fleet. Therefore, we believe that the longer they have to think over the matter, the less they will be inclined to regard the prospect of war as desirable.

On the other hand, account must always be taken of the inflammable character of the French people, and, oddly enough, the British people are themselves in a frame of mind that will not permit the government to delay very much in bringing the matter to a head. There is no race in the world that will do more to keep out of a fight than our own; but there is also none that more quickly resents being imposed upon. Yet the incoming French ministry can very properly ask Lord Salisbury for sufficient time to pick up the threads of the discussion, and the British people will not be so unreasonable as not to concede it.

It is to be hoped that the government will not neglect the sanitary precautions which the condition of Dawson in the spring will call for.

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DIXI H. ROSS.

PIONEERS OF THE NORTH.

In the last copy of the Edmonton Bulletin received there is a letter from Rudolph Smith to his parents. Young Smith left Edmonton on March 10 last, and his letter is dated July 15, so he had been four months and five days on the journey. He estimated that they were then 1,200 miles from home and 20 days' journey from the Liard. Their rate of travel had been, therefore, about 10 miles a day, and the total distance from Edmonton to the Liard by the course taken by the party would, therefore, be about 1,400 miles. As the distance in a direct line between the two points is not much above 700 miles, the party must have gone in a very roundabout direction. There were at the time of writing 60 men in the party, with 250 horses and 45 steers. The journey presented many difficulties, but young Smith says they had plenty to eat, and that game was very abundant. The whole party, he says, were in the best of health, and wanted for nothing. They had been led to believe that valuable placers would be found on the Liard, but Smith was in very great doubt if they would be able to send a report out to civilization until next year.

The region which they traversed is certainly a great lone land. They had not seen an Indian since leaving the Peace river, and they were very confident that they were the pioneers of Northeastern British Columbia. We think they are entitled to this credit.

Everyone will feel a deep interest in the fortunes of this plucky expedition. That they may have abundant success will be the hope of all. Such men are genuine empire-builders. The deeds which they have done would, if performed in Australia or Africa, elicit the admiration of people the world over. The travels of men who have crossed Australia have been told in book and story; the world admires the great journey of Marchand, but the former were shorter and the latter very little longer than the trail which these gold-seekers have followed. It is true that the latter have no hostile natives to contend with, but their expedition is a notable one nevertheless, and we are sure that Colonist readers will join with us in expressing admiration for their fortitude and courage.

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