

THE TRUCK SYSTEM.

Chase ten in Mr. Kellie's Truck Act seems to have given a good deal of trouble in the house the day before yesterday. Undoubtedly the barbarous legal jargon in which, unfortunately, it is still deemed proper to draw up bills plain people are expected to read and understand ("ignorance of the law excuseth no man" is of cast-iron application), renders confusion almost inevitable; and this will be the case till those medievalisms are cut out of our public business. Mr. Kellie's bill aims at the suppression of one of the most abominable abuses that disgrace the social life of the present day—to put an end to the heartless "sweating" of helpless workmen by unscrupulous contractors and others, and give our laboring classes a chance to obtain proper compensation for their work. To many persons who never bother their heads with such matters, and there are ever many, it will be astonishing news to learn that the British workman, in too many instances, is a Louisiana plantation slave before the war; compelled to take "truck" for wages, and fed on garbage called "provisions" supplied by the contractor, and charged for at Dawson City prices. In British Columbia there is crying need for such legislation as that offered by Mr. Kellie's bill, which is modeled on the British act of 1831. We are decidedly behind the mother land in providing legislation for the protection of our toilers—the vicious and wholly indefensible system known as the truck system was prohibited in Great Britain in Charles the Second's time, and more fully in 1831, by statute 1 and 2, William IV., c. 37, which requires that the wages of workmen be paid in coin or current money, and not in goods. In spite of that act, though, the system flourishes to a considerable extent. It is an outrageous and most impudent thing for any contractor or employer to dictate or attempt to dictate to his workmen where they shall eat and sleep, what they shall eat and what they shall pay for food and lodging. Where such action on the part of any contractor or employer can be proved, the criminal should be punished with the utmost severity of the law as an example to other rascals. The workmen should be the special charges of a paternal government, and their rights and interests should be most jealously guarded against the greedy contractor who attempts to fleece them.

The evil which Mr. Kellie's bill seeks to uproot constitutes one of the most serious attacks on the liberties of the most useful, but, unfortunately, most helpless (at present) portion of the community. Workmen have themselves recently to blame for the growth of this monstrous system; they steadily refuse to recognize their own power to right their own wrongs by the simple process of organization, union. When they do, truck acts will be unnecessary; for the abolition known as the truck system will not exist. But until labor in British Columbia is organized, united and strong; formed into a fraternity able to guard its own interests, it must expect to see the truck system continue to flourish. Mr. Kellie's bill, it is understood, will have a stormy passage through the house; its numerous enemies will attempt to back the life out of it and reduce it to a poor emaciated thing, utterly ineffectual for the purposes originally intended. The friends of the working man in the house should see to it that such attempts are met properly, and that the changes that may be made are made for good and sufficient cause.

SONGHEES RESERVE CRISIS.

Vitality important to the welfare of Victoria is the prompt removal of the Songhees Indian reserve from the heart of the city to some point outside Victoria. The question has now reached a crisis; it remains with the citizens themselves to say whether that unsightly blot upon the fairest city in Canada shall remain, or whether it shall be removed at once and forever to a place more suited to its presence. We have published (Saturday, April 9th) in full the correspondence which passed between Mr. J. A. J. McKenna, representing the Department of the Interior of the Dominion government, and Premier Turner. We sincerely trust that every good citizen read that correspondence and gave it his best thought. For it contained, among other things, the severest arraignment of the Turner ministry that ever saw the light of day in public print. Every person who read that correspondence must have felt himself puzzled by the same enigma that puzzled us—what on earth ever prompted the Turner government to renege the Dominion government's offer? Can anyone solve the riddle? Most assuredly the solution does not appear in the letters of the premier or the Hon. Mr. Eberts, attorney-general and acting premier. Yet the people have a right to know, and if the enthusiasm, energy and public spirit animating the party of Victoria citizens now exerting themselves to bring this matter to a focus spread among the citizens, they can force the Turner government to explain why? Citizens of Victoria, it will be a shameful, humiliating thing to allow this affair to pass unnoted without protest. The reward of the struggle that we hope will now be engaged in is splendid—the immediate acceptance of the Dominion government's generous offer and the early removal of the reserve. Public opinion, strongly and unanimously expressed, can force this piece of tardy justice from the provincial government's unwilling hands; it is well worth the effort. What the public-spirited citizens propose is that the mayor call a public meeting for, say, Friday evening in the City Hall; that every effort be made to get a representative gathering of all classes of the citizens; that strong, plainly worded resolutions be drawn up, and that no time be lost in bringing the same before the government. We cordially endorse these proposals; we sincerely hope that the citizens will turn out en masse, and that the programme as outlined will be carried through. Let there be no unseemly bickering or hair-splitting, but unanimity on these points:

1. What was the reason for the refusal by the provincial government of the Dominion government's advantageous offer?

2. Is there any good reason why the offer should not even now be accepted?

3. That the government be most earnestly urged to take definite action looking to the removal of the reserve, or give good and sufficient reasons for refusal to do so.

WAR TO THE KNIFE.

What we said relating to the reception of the iniquitous redistribution bill the Turner government have shown on the people would get in the upper country was quite correct. A perfect hurricane of wrath and indignation has swept the inland constituencies, and our telegraphic dispatches say it was with difficulty some of the citizens were restrained from burning Premier Turner in effigy. Why were the citizens restrained? Why were those who restrained them not apprehended and detained in custody? Outrageous public feeling must find vent somewhere, and surely it is little as Premier Turner can expect that he shall be changed and humiliated in effigy as representative of the ministry that issued a measure which betrays upper country interests most shamefully. The Duke of Wellington was believed in "Axele" House for a milder crime; and many a legislator has been actually assassinated for less. Indignation meetings, our correspondent says, are being arranged, and the people are pledging themselves to oppose the Turner government at the next election. In good sooth, Premier Turner and his fellow ministers have made a woful mess of their chances in the upper country by this stroke of business. That and the Revelstoke bank affair; the Kettle River Railway resolution; the premier's prevarication to the Revelstokers; Hon. Chinese "Rats" Martin's awful "breaks" in the house (and out of it); Hon. Mr. Bumpkins Pleb. Eberts's attorney-generalizing; Hon. C. E. Pooley's pugilistic belligerency and two-opportunisticness; Hon. Col. Baker's coal dealing and education maggot; all have contributed their quota to the political damnation of the Turner company of ministerial acrobats so far as the upper country is concerned. In Victoria they have committed political suicide in particularly wanton and "blaggy" fashion by blotting the "Songhees" reserve removal business. Pity the advocate that pleads the cause of such a crew. British Columbia will never prosper so long as the Turner ministry or its like have control of its affairs.

OUR FRIEND, THE KUNNEL.

Can there be any truth in the faint rumor that has reached Victoria that the American government, recognizing the inevitableness of war with Spain and calling in all American citizens to the colors have summoned the American citizen editor of the Colonist to take command of a newly-raised regiment of sealabies known as the Seattle Genadier Stunners? At all events if such be the case we can only admire the sterling common sense and businesslike appreciation of the American government in its choice of talented warriors to lead on to victory the battalions of the republic. The Kunnel is gifted by nature, and art to do this thing for the American people; but it is rumored the American war department want him particularly to take charge of the war correspondents in the field, the Kunnel's magnificent descriptive touch being better known to the war department of his adopted country than it is even in his foreword one. It is understood he is to have charge of the writing-up of the series of brilliant victories laid down in the American plans to be won over the garlic Spaniards by the gallant Yankees. The Kunnel's unique experience in "doing up" company notices will make him a rare hand at the yellowish details! Should Kunnel

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MIXING IT UP.

This morning the editor of the Colonist takes the public of Victoria into his confidence and informs them that he "is one of a syndicate engaged in exploiting the Omineca country," from which the unquestionably precious Mr. Grider has just arrived; and "that he (the editor of the Colonist), with others, ("there are others"), instructed Captain Black to make some additional filings in Omineca." "Oh, ho; indeed, now, and if it is not an impertinent question, how many more companies, syndicates and what-nots is this dogmatic American-American-editor connected with? They are coming out by degrees—in penny numbers, so to speak—and we shall have a pretty list directly. The company quickly found out the value of their editor-director and forthwith "fired" him; what will the syndicate do when it finds that the proprietors of the Colonist will not allow any brazen-faced "tooting" of Omineca in its columns by the syndicate editor-director, and their hazy "turns out barren"? What strikes the average citizen here is the mountainous impudence of this man who lays down the law to British subjects as if he had a charter direct from Her Majesty, allegiance to whom he solemnly forswore, "so help him God"; impugns the motives of men of unblemished character, and prostitutes the columns of the Colonist to "hoops," "hoots," "boots" and puff private confessions in which he is peculiarly interested. This is the creature who venoquously assails the character of Senator Templeman by insinuations utterly baseless and void of truth. He says he has something to say against the Senator that would not be to his credit to publish. If the editor of the Colonist retains the remotest recollection of what is gentlemanly, if he is for fair play and even-handed justice, let him at once prefer his charge. We do not believe for a single instant that his cowardly insinuation was anything more than a piece of that American "bluff" that places for astuteness among the scum of American frontier towns; but if the editor of the Colonist does not reply to this challenge he must expect to have himself branded in this community as cowardly, untruthful and no gentleman.

J. W. Forrest, one of the passengers of the Central, left Dawson on March 14th. He estimates the output for this winter at about \$15,000,000. He says that nearly all the claims which have been found now have been prospected are turning out well, particularly Dominion Creek, which will probably rival the Dorado and Bonanza. The day before he left prospectors working there took out a pan which went as high as \$200. He is a claim owner on the tributaries of the El Dorado, and brings out some large nuggets as samples of what his party produce. He is accompanied by Judge McGuire and party at Five Fingers, on their way to Dawson.

KLONDIKE NUGGETS

Interest in the Northern Goldfields Increased by the Latest Exhibit.

"Plunger" Charlie Meadows Estimates the Winter's Output at \$30,000,000.

Gold nuggets are becoming quite common in Victoria, but even in the days of Cariboo's wonderful production of the yellow metal it is doubtful if large ones were seen here than those which have been exhibited to-day in the Grotto saloon, Trounce avenue, and which were obtained from Hunter and Bonanza creeks. They are the property of Charles Meadows, known as "Plunger" Charlie, a recently returned Klondiker, and four feet of them are shown in the exhibit, and a considerably more than \$1,000, the largest being worth \$215.

Mr. Meadows went to Dawson last year, taking with him twelve men and seven tons of supplies. The men were all under grub stake contracts, and succeeded in getting claims on the richest creeks in the district.

"I travelled up and down the creeks for several weeks," says Mr. Meadows, "just to get acquainted with the biggest mines and to investigate the properties of the Klondike. I found that the Klondiker estimates, and I don't want you to say that I have formed any calculations as to the probable output of the Klondike. Yet, any man was to look at these estimates before the public and that some of them have been thought of as being too high. This is why I am not particularly anxious to make any prognostications. We will all know when the dumps have been washed out."

Mr. Meadows has a list of all the claim owners on Bonanza, El Dorado, Hunter, Bear, All Gold, Sulphur and Dominion creeks. On eighty of the big best dividend payers in the district, he is working down into the mines and running the dirt from the bedrock just as the mine workers did. Then he talked with the Klondiker, and he says that he is not a Klondiker, but that he is a Klondiker's son, and that he is a Klondiker's son, and that he is a Klondiker's son.

Mr. Meadows is in Victoria in the interest of the "Klondike News," the prospecting paper which he has recently covered 24-page journal devoted to the interests of the Klondiker and his tributaries. The paper is published in Dawson, and contains 130 half-page illustrations of the richest mines and photo-engravings and biographical sketches of the leading mine owners.

The Klondiker is a weekly paper published in Chicago, and one million copies distributed throughout the United States. The paper is published in Dawson, and contains 130 half-page illustrations of the richest mines and photo-engravings and biographical sketches of the leading mine owners.

Paint is to a Building. THE SHERWIN-WILLIAMS PAINT. It is made for painting buildings. It is not a low-priced paint, but it is cheap because the best. It is made of the purest materials that wear the longest. The colors are bright and handsome.

employed on the railway. The amendment then being put, 52 voted for it and 70 against it. The original motion was then put and carried.

New Westminster, April 22.—The board of trade at the meeting last night adopted the following resolution: "Resolved, That it is the opinion of this board that, under the existing emergency, it is the duty of the government of British Columbia, in order to protect and preserve the natural trade and other interests of the province, to secure the immediate construction of a railway from Teslin lake to Glenora, and the continuation of such a road to some suitable port on the British Columbia coast, as soon as possible, if such construction can be secured on advantageous terms."

DOMINION HOUSE. The Killing of the Kettle River Railway Bill by the Legislators.

Insinuations by Frost Lead to a Hot Time—Pandemonium in the Chamber.

Ottawa, April 16.—The chief interest in the House of Commons yesterday centered in the close of the debate over the Kettle River Valley Railway bill introduced by Mr. Bostock, and supported by the Liberal and Conservative members of the C.P.R. and a majority of the Conservatives. The fight has continued for weeks in the railway committee, and has lasted three weeks in the house at odd intervals, and came to a head last night, when the bill was shown out by a vote of forty-four to sixty-four.

Mr. Frost proceeded with his speech, but when he had uttered probably half a dozen sentences Mr. Davin interrupted him and called for the ruling of Deputy Speaker Brodeur, who was in the chair. The speaker's impartial ruling was that both the statement of Mr. Bennett and the answer of Mr. Frost were equally unfortunate and unparliamentary.

THE PARIS CAPTURE. Spanish Cruiser Said To Be The American Liner Irish Coast. United States Issues a Proclamation Asking for 120,000 Men Two Years.

London, April 23.—Newspapers in this city have been busy in the last few days in the effect that the American Paris has been captured. The coast by a Spanish cruiser has not returned to South America. She passed the Isthmus of Panama.

Madrid, April 23.—(12) reported capture of the steamer City of Paris by a Spanish cruiser aroused great excitement in this city. The steamer was favorably affected by the news.

Washington, D. C. Washington Post says today sent a message to the president of the United States, asking for a declaration of war against Spain.

Some Report Key West, April 23.—Reports that the steamer captured by the Spanish cruiser, is a private ship, and that the crew were captured.

London, April 23.—The Spanish cruiser captured the steamer City of Paris, and is now on its way to Spain.

Indian Up Santa Fe, April 23.—The Indian up Santa Fe, and is now on its way to Santa Fe.