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TALES OF THE TOWN.

*"I must have liberty
Withal, as large a charter as the wind
To blow on whom I please."*

ALMOST every one in Victoria knows S. Perry Mills, Esq., either as the celebrated criminal lawyer or as the gentleman whose close resemblance to the Prince of Wales has become a question of common remark; not every one, however, knows Mr. Mills as a lover and enthusiastic friend of the bee—neither the sewing bee nor the quilting bee, but the ordinary honey bee of commerce. It is a fact, nevertheless, and Mr. Mills has now an invention which he has recently perfected at his private apiary and upon which a patent has already been applied for. "I have for some time been experimenting in the matter," Mr. Mills explains, "and have I think, accomplished the great object sought. My bees, you see, were strictly union, and though they would improve each shining hour according to statute, they would immediately thereafter knock off work. That was all right in the dull season, but, when the run was on, I ventured to remonstrate, only to be met with a stinging retort. I tried again, alike fruitlessly. Then I commenced to experiment, and by crossing the common honey bee with the marsh fire fly I have secured a honey maker which will not only work the day out but hustle all night as well. I am at present considering an offer from Victoria West to have a force of my bees patrol their streets at night, and will probably close with it unless the council moves in the direction of street illumination there very shortly."

Mr. E. F. King, a veteran official of the postal service, was in Victoria for a few days last week on a vocation trip, a well earned vacation, too, for Mr. King occupies the important position of Post Office Inspector of the Montreal division, one of the largest and busiest of the service. For the past thirty-two years, Mr. King has served the country, and has won his way to his present position by his sterling integrity, his manifest personal ability and devotion to the public interests. In the Montreal division, which embraces a large extent of well populated territory, it requires a man of not only good administrative ability, but, owing to the different races of people, a man of extraordinary tact, and in Mr. King has been found the combined qualities necessary to smooth away all friction or difficulty. If all the departments of the Dominion Government were under the control of men as conscientious and energetic as Mr. King, the recent departmental scandals would never have been heard of.

If present indications mean anything,

nearly every one in the city who can possibly get away will go over to Seattle next Saturday on the Knights of Pythias excursion. The Knights have chartered the Islander, and, for the somewhat insignificant sum of \$1.50, will convey pleasure seekers to and from Seattle. The excursions of the Knights in the past have always been conducted with marked regard for decorum, and this one will be no exception to the general rule. The number of tickets to be sold will be limited, so that all can rest assured that there will be no overcrowding.

The excursion to Vancouver on Dominion Day was one of much pleasure. The Vancouver people restrained themselves and did not meet their visitors with the hose as they used to do last summer. This may be accounted for by the fact that water is unusually scarce at the Terminal City just now. Like Dives of parable fame the Vancouverites thrust out their parched tongues and cry "water, water!" I have no desire to point out the further application of this most beautiful word picture. There is some talk of importing a rainmaker from Texas to supply the want. This, in my opinion, is unnecessary. Nature will soon supply the deficiency, or else Vancouver is not the Vancouver of old. Just wait till the fall rains set in, and you will hear something drop.

As anticipated in these columns, President Ellis' mammoth aggregation of invincibles "turned down" the Vancouver lacrosse club at that city last Saturday. The game, I am pleased to learn, was remarkably free from gore, in fact it is said to have been one of the finest exhibitions of science and muscle yet seen in this province. The pennant now looms up in the distance, and Victorians consequently feel proud of their club. As much cannot be said for the local cricket club, as the Vancouver club outplayed their opponents at every point.

Wedding presents are now the order of the day. When a young couple gets married, it has become the fashion for the whole circle of their acquaintance to make a wedding present. Jewellers' shops are ransacked for appropriate offerings. Tea and table spoons, sugar tongs, cruet stands and teapots are, so to speak, flying about in all directions. We can see the reasonableness of these presents from such relations as father and mother, uncles and aunts and cousins, but, if in the future it is to be extended beyond this family circle, it will soon become to be felt as a tax upon good nature, and should never have been introduced. An old friend of mine thus writes of the indiscriminate manner in which presents of this character are made: "This wedding present business seems to have originated with the aristocracy of

the Mother Country, but is apparently not confined to them, for here we have a specimen of it right before us. The Duke of York was married last Thursday, and we were asked to give something to show our loyalty, and the hat was passed round to take up a collection. The ladies at Ottawa, driven to their wits end to know what to send, at first thought considered that the monster cheese sent to the World's Fair would be a suitable wedding present, but were told that a sleigh from Canada would be more appropriate. It would have been of great assistance if His Royal Highness had furnished a list of what would be acceptable. For instance, would an elegantly mounted meerschaum pipe, a silver cigar case or a gold-headed cane have been acceptable? Doubtless presents of all kinds poured in, and, in due time, we shall have columns of newspaper notice, with full accounts of their description and by whom contributed. Verily this movement was a mistake—a pitiful mistake. The man who apparently will be our future king should never have consented to these appeals being made, and should not have put himself under the obligation of receiving these presents. It was an undignified proceeding, and did not read well. We want that our future king should occupy a more manly and independent position."

Wagon-road builders and most patrons of wagon roads are familiar at least with the names of macadam and telford roads. These names stand for good, honest wagon roads whereon a team may haul at all seasons of the year a load of respectable dimensions. Such roads exist in many European countries and to a greater or less extent on this continent. They cost money, but when properly constructed are worth much more than their cost. It is remarked by an exchange, it is certainly a recommendation and a compliment to the men who originated these systems of construction that such roads should take their names not spelled with capital letters.

A new system of railroad building has been but lately developed on this continent by Mr. "Jim" Hill, of the Great Northern, which deserves a new, complimentary and lasting title. Contrary to all recent precedent, Mr. Hill has gone on and built a trans-continental railway from St. Paul to Puget Sound, without a blare of trumpets, without government subsidies and without hawking its bonds or other securities at a fraction of their value—in short Mr. Hill has built this great railway as an ordinary, every day citizen would go about any legitimate and honorable employment. The road is complete; has cost only a small part of any other competing line, and as a consequence can do business on a legitimate