

The Colonist.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15.

A SENSIBLE OLD MAN.

A friend has kindly sent us an American campaign tract. It is in the form of a letter written by Mr. J. W. Cooper to the Santa Barbara Herald. Its title is "Stop Your Kicking," and it, from the first sentence to the last, is full of plain wholesome common sense. The writer addresses those who are complaining that the rich are in these days getting richer, and the poor poorer, that those who are making money are all rogues and extortioners, and declaring that the only virtuous people that are left in the world are the men who have not one dollar to rub against another.

There are a good many such growlers and kickers here as well as in the United States. His answer to these discontented demagogues when they say, "Look how millionaires have increased in the last fifty years," is:

I admit it; but the same increase holds good with the three-quarter million, the half million, the hundred-thousand-dollar man, and so on down to the well-to-do laborer and farmer. The advance in wealth takes in all classes except the idle, the dissolute, and in rare cases the unfortunate.

To the complaint that the poor are getting poorer, he replies that the advance in wealth and comfort is participated in by all classes, the wage-earners as well as others.

You can see this, he says, if you compare the wages and prices of to-day with those of fifty years ago. You could hire a good common laborer then for 15 to 20 cents a day. I have known good farm hands to hire by the year for \$80 and board. At that time every parent had to pay for his children's schooling, and you could hire a teacher—the best they had then—for \$15 a month and board him round among his patrons. Now, any kind of a teacher gets \$50 to \$60, and any kind of a hired hand \$15 and board. That is all right. I like to see the laborer get good pay, and I don't believe there is any man living who has more sympathy for the poor laboring man than I; for no man ever started in life poorer than I did. I began without a dime in my pocket. My first job was harvesting and threshing out grain with horses for 20 cents a day and boarded myself, except that my employer gave me a lunch. There was no farm machinery then and grain had to be tramped out with horses.

How is it now? The harvest hand gets from \$1.50 to \$2.50 per day, and owing to the rapid work of the reaping and threshing machines the farmer gets more out of it than he did then. Both the farmer and his hand educate their children, if they have any, at the public expense. The older ones are sent to a public high school, and if Johnny's parents want a lawyer in the family, there is a Hastings Law School that don't cost him a cent. All is supported by the taxpayer, the much abused owner of property, and it is all free to Johnny even if his father don't pay a cent of the taxes for his support. That is all right and I like to see it. What I don't like is to hear Johnny's father complaining about the rich people robbing the poor.

The old gentleman is evidently a keen observer and he looks at things as they are and not from a standpoint of impossible theory:

Talk about the rich getting richer and the poor poorer! If you are standing with a stranger on the street to-day, and the daughter of a millionaire and the daughter of a carpenter, a teamster or hod-carrier pass by, and you ask the stranger to guess which one is the daughter of the millionaire, the odds are even that he will point to the daughter of the hod-carrier. In all probability she is as well dressed and as well educated as the other. It is all bosh to talk about the times getting harder for the poor man than they used to be. We are all getting more extravagant and reckless. We want to get money to spend and make a show with, and we do it with a vengeance; and then we get swamped and go abusing the banker or capitalist who loaned us the money and had to foreclose on our homes to save himself from loss.

Then Mr. Cooper tells the kickers that they can get a great deal more of the necessities, the comforts and the luxuries of life for their money now than wage earners could when he was a boy and their pay so low. He says:

But to show that times are not harder with the laborer or the farmer than they were fifty or sixty years ago, let me quote a few prices. A suit of men's clothes that you get now for \$15 or \$20 would then have cost you \$40. The common wooden bucket that you buy for 25 cents then cost from three to four times as much as it does now. Guns, shot, lead, rope, everything that was made abroad or imported, cost from two to four times what they do now. Common brown sugar was worth from 12 to 18 cents a pound, tea twice what it is now, and coffee so dear that I have many a time browned barley or wheat and mixed it, two-thirds barley or wheat and one-third coffee. Tea, coffee, and sugar were then considered luxuries, now they are considered necessities. Nails, I remember, were ten cents a pound. You could not get any kind of calico for less than 14 cents a yard. These are only a few samples. The same fall in prices will hold true of everything the people have to buy except farm products. Now for those products, which most of the people then had to raise to get money to pay for the high priced articles I have named. I have raised many a ton of tobacco and sold it for \$2.50 per hundred weight for the very best, the poorer quality bringing only 75 cents. I have seen corn that would yield fifty bushels to the acre sell in the field for \$1.37½ cents per acre at administrator's sale. Figs and shoats four months old sold at the same time for 37½ cents a dozen. I have seen sold at the country hotel many a dozen chickens at 37½ cents. I have sold turkeys grown, fat and dressed at 20 cents each and took my pay in dry goods at more than double the present prices. How is it now? I have paid 25 cents per pound for turkey in this town. I have seen many a nice cow

and calf sold both for \$6. I have sold, after driving them four miles, 23 hogs, averaging 250 pounds neat meat, for \$71, and everything else in proportion. Servant girls in those days hired out for 50 cents a week and board, and they not only did the cooking but also the washing and ironing. I have known men take contracts to clear up heavy timbered land at \$5 per acre, ready for 10 to 15 large trees to the acre, any one of which could not be got out of the way at the present time for less than \$5.

From this it can be seen that all classes are better off now than they were in the days of their fathers and their grandfathers, and that many of the grievances that people complain of are more imaginary than real.

Those who believe that the demagogues who are continually trying to make people discontented with things as they are would, if they had the power, make life easier and pleasanter for the masses, have only to observe how they act when by some unfortunate chance they are elevated to positions of authority and responsibility. So far from making matters better they make them worse. They are, as a class, the greediest of office seekers, the most unscrupulous of spoil grabbers, and the most blundering as well as the most corrupt of administrators. Place a howling demagogue in an office in which he can exercise power and the chances are a hundred to one that he proves to be the most intolerant and the most arbitrary of tyrants, and let him by some chance get rich and he becomes exacting as a creditor and offensively proud as a member of society.

THE FISHERIES DECISION. The judgment of the Supreme Court on the subject of the provincial jurisdiction over the rivers and streams of the provinces appears to be rather intricate. From the synopses of it that have reached us it is difficult to say how far the jurisdiction of the Dominion extends, or what is the exact authority of the provinces. The general impression conveyed is that the decision is favorable to the provinces; but how favorable, it is at this moment, at any rate in British Columbia, impossible to say. Among the subjects that come under "the exclusive legislative authority of the Parliament of Canada" according to the British America Act is that of the "Sea Coast and Inland Fisheries." How this apparently unlimited authority is restricted by the terms of confederation and the matters assigned exclusively by the same act to the Legislatures of the Provinces, we have as yet no means of knowing.

It would be satisfactory to know how far the decision of the Supreme Court, if confirmed on appeal, will affect the regulation say, of the Fraser River Fishery. We have, since our attention has been directed to the salmon fishery, considered it unfortunate that this important fishery should be to a very great extent regulated by officials thousands of miles away, who necessarily know very little about the conditions under which the industry is carried on. If the decision of the Supreme Court transfers the jurisdiction hitherto exercised by the Dominion Government over the salmon fishery to the Government of the Province, we believe that it has conferred a benefit both on the Province and the fishery interest. That the decision will have this effect appears from the following sentence in our special telegram from Ottawa: "The Dominion is given the control of navigable waters also, as far as public works on them are concerned; but as regards all other things, especially fishing and fisheries, the effect of the judgment seems to be wholly in favor of the provinces." This sentence is qualified, it may be very materially, by another in the same telegram, which reads: "In the tidal waters neither the Dominion nor the Provinces can restrict the public right of fishing." If this is to be understood as it reads, fishery regulations are to be done away with altogether, for nearly all those regulations restrict the public right of fishing. The close season is a restriction of that right, so is the regulation preventing the fishermen from fishing during the open season a considerable number of hours in every week. To take from both the Dominion and the Province the power to restrict the public right of fishing, seems to us most unreasonable. But our correspondent says that the judgment is greatly involved, and it may have been impossible to give a clear description of it in a short telegram. The judgment, however, is one of great importance, and if it defines clearly the respective powers of the Federal and the Provincial Governments, and gives the Provinces greater authority than has hitherto been accorded to them, it will, we think, prove beneficial to the people of all parts of the Dominion.

RIGHT FEELING.

Party disagreements and dislikes appear to have been completely forgotten on the occasion of the celebration of the golden wedding of Sir Charles and Lady Tupper. Congratulations poured on them from every side—from political opponents as well as political friends. All seem to recognize that in Sir Charles Tupper Canada has a devoted son and a most valuable servant.

The Toronto Telegram, of which Mr. Ross Robertson is sole proprietor, bears handsome and hearty testimony to the value of Sir Charles Tupper's services to

Canada. Mr. Robertson, who is the most independent of the Independents, has forgotten his estrangement and speaks of the Premier as "an illustrious Canadian," and goes on to say, "No man did more to make Confederation possible, and no man lives who is more truly attached to Canada and Britain."

The following is the concluding paragraph of the Telegram's article, which is headed "Long Life to Him":

The bitterness of partisanship, the just resentments provoked by the errors of party leaders, should not cloud the happiness of the anniversary which Sir Charles Tupper, Lady Tupper and their children celebrate to-day. The whole Tupper family rejoice with them. Sir Charles Tupper, one of the bravest fighters who ever drew a sword in politics, surrounded as he is by the love of wife and children and grandchildren, which is worth so much more than political glory, is not likely to let one reverse in the game of politics cloud the gladness of his golden wedding.

This is as it should be, and we have no doubt that the friendly spirit and the admiration exhibited by Mr. Robertson are felt by thousands who considered it their duty to oppose Sir Charles Tupper in the late election contest.

STILL QUIBBLING.

The stupidity of the complaint that the subsidies which Col. Prior interested himself to obtain for this Province were not found among the supplementary estimates having been shown, the Times now with equal disregard for the truth falls back upon the assertion that Col. Prior "actually represented it as being among the estimates." In support of this it quotes an evident misprint in a report of the meeting at Cedar Hill, where the word "estimates" appears when the context shows that "subsidies" was intended. Subsidies never appear in the estimates, as the Times must know by now. As well might it have questioned the accuracy of a statement attributed to Colonel Prior in the Colonist of yesterday, because the words "Tupper Government" appear where "Bowell Government" was evidently meant, for though leader of the House of Commons Sir Charles Tupper was not yet Premier at the time referred to.

Even the Times ought to know that business coming before the cabinet is necessarily discussed long before it becomes a matter of official record. It is the agreement arrived at by the ministers as the result of these discussions that when the time for action comes, and not before, is formally drawn up as an order in council or resolution for presentation to parliament.

AN INTERESTING REPORT.

It will be remembered that a committee of the Trades and Labor Assembly of the United States was, a few weeks ago, sent to Mexico to find out whether or not the condition of the laboring classes in a country where silver is the only standard is better than it is where the standard of value is gold. This committee have returned from their visit to the land of silver and their report we gather that the native workingman and woman in Mexico do not know what comfort is. The difference as to the standard of comfort between the American workingman and the Mexican workingman is so great that the committee found it difficult to institute a comparison between them. They say: "The two peoples, as to their habits, tastes, customs and mode of life, are such that a comparison is unnatural. Life is regarded from very different standpoints, as they live under different conditions, such as the Mexican laborer is apparently content with the four bare walls of his 10-foot-square adobe hut, with nothing inside but the ground to sleep on, a shawl or blanket to cover or wrap himself up in, a dish of tortillas (corn pancakes) and frijoles (beans) for his frugal meal, and a large number of cases little pig, a dog and a chicken or two of the gamecock order sharing his scant quarters, while an American laborer across the line has all the comforts of home and many of the luxuries of life.

Foreigners, who monopolize all the higher positions on the railways, are fairly well paid, but the natives in what factories and on the farms get what would be considered in the States starvation wages.

In a broom factory near the depot at Jimenez, the men are paid 50 cents; women and children, 25 to 37½ cents per day. In the cotton mills, seed oil mills and soap factories at Torreon, men are paid 47½ to 50 cents; women and children, 25 cents per day.

A carador (public carrier) has a rate of 12½ cents per hour, but you can hire him for from 25 to 37½ cents per day. At Leon, where nearly all the leather goods in Mexico are manufactured, the peon gets his leather cut for shoes or other goods to be made by him, and takes the material to his hut, where the whole family assists him, the same as in the sweatshops of Chicago. For making dozen pairs; on the other goods, he receives 37½ to 50 cents per day, or his labor, working as long as daylight lasts, averaging 12 to 14 hours per day.

Common laborers can be hired for 18 to 50 cents per day. House servants, male or female, receive \$3 to \$5 per month, and board themselves. In or near cities peons live in adobe houses, and pay a rental of \$3 a year for the ground that the house stands on. When leaving this for another location all improvements the peon has made go to the landlord or owner of the land, who pays no taxes whatever on the land.

The farm laborer in Mexico is little better than a slave. The committee report that:

On the hacienda the peon gets about 18 to 50 cents per day for his work and

a hut to live in, if he builds it himself. The peon gets no money except on feast days and religious offerings. By this system he is always in debt to the hacendado. This form of slavery has been forbidden by law for a number of years, but two-thirds of the peons do not know it, as they can neither read nor write, and their masters take good care not to teach them this fact.

The Mexicans are miserably clad and they live upon food that an American workman would not look at. The chief article of dress of the laborer, the committee say, is the sombrero, which often costs as much as thirty-five dollars and is bought on the installment plan, "and the balance of his clothing would make a crazy quilt turn green with envy owing to its variety of color and assortment of patches." Stockings are not worn by either sex, and sandals are the only footwear of a large proportion of the inhabitants. They are made of a piece of sole leather bound to the foot by straps, and cost from twelve to twenty-five cents a pair. In one of the best hotels of a large city of 70,000 inhabitants the victors could not get butter. When they asked for it they were told that it cost one dollar a pound, and if they paid that price for it some would be purchased and kept for their exclusive use.

These men have drawn such a picture of things as they are with respect to the laboring class in Mexico that it is not likely that the Bryanites will ever try to allure American workmen into voting for the free coinage of silver by telling them of the advantages enjoyed by the workmen of Mexico.

A FRIVOLOUS REPLY.

The Victoria Colonist has some remarks to make about the Mining Review. It says that the Review is a new journal making a bid for popular favor, and that it hurts itself and hurts British Columbia by making violent remarks about the land policy of the British Columbia Government. Poor, dear Colonist! Its horizon is limited by the city of Victoria. Twenty thousand exceedingly provincial people are its world. Their esteem is to it the breath of life. By their censure it would die. Here in Rossland we have a wider horizon and a freer air. We speak our own thoughts and care little what people may think of them. At the same time, how fatuous is the Colonist! It quotes in full an article from the Review which it thinks, because it astounds the Victorian public to whom the clique that runs the Government are as gods not to be lightly spoken of, will not forcibly appeal as true and righteous to a wider audience. "The Rossland Mining Review.

The foregoing is a fair sample of the way in which some unscrupulous newspapers prove the accusations they have made and divert attention from the untruthfulness of their statements. Such rubbish passes current among a class of badly informed people as very clever writing, and if we were to judge the community which the Review is endeavoring to cultivate as a constituency by this kind of newspaper proflander, we should have a very poor opinion of their morality or their intelligence. Fortunately, we have a higher opinion of the community of Rossland as a whole than to believe them capable of being influenced by clap-trap and demagogic froth, and for that reason the Colonist expressed the belief in a former article that such intemperate and ill-judged language as that with which the Review signaled its entrance into the journalistic arena was calculated to prejudice its chances of success and, by being quoted by professing reputable newspapers, to injure the Province as well.

We refer to the matter again to show how glibly and flippantly such papers as the Review deal with very important matters. The question is not the freedom of the press at Rossland, or what the thoughts of the editors up there may be; but the making of serious charges, which, if true, would be matters of the gravest concern to the public. The Review stated openly and unblushingly that the Government gave public lands away for considerations which did not appear in the accounts of the Province, but in private ledgers only; and also referred to the precincts of the Lands and Works as "tarnished," and administrative acts as "predations," as unfair, etc. Now, without calling the members of the Government and public officials thieves and robbers in the sense of actually stealing and plundering, nothing could be more direct and plain than what was stated. The responsibility which such editors attach to the manner in which they reply when asked to substantiate them. It may be an advantage in a certain and peculiar sense to live and breathe in a "wider horizon and a freer air," but the advantages are essentially personal and peculiar to the editor who enjoys a blessed immunity from all consequences.

TAKEN WITH SPASMS.

A Collingwood Resident Tells How South American Nerve Cured His Daughter of Distressing Nervous Disease.

The father of Jessie Merchant, of Collingwood, tells this story of his eleven-year-old daughter: "I doctored with the most skilled physicians in Collingwood, but without any relief coming to my daughter, spending nearly five hundred dollars in this way. A friend influenced me to try South American Nerve, though I took it with little hope of its being any good. When she began its use she was hardly able to move about, and after taking a few bottles she can now run around as other children." For stomach troubles and nervousness there is nothing so good as South American Nerve.

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October, November, December.

During these months every subscriber to THE SEMI-WEEKLY COLONIST renewing a subscription for one year and enclosing five cents to cover cost of mailing, will receive a copy of the beautiful lithograph "LISTENING TO THE BIRDS," a fac simile of the picture issued with the Xmas Number last year. This picture is a gem, and neatly framed is well worthy a place on the walls of any home.

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The Semi-Weekly Colonist

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