

## The Colonist.

FRIDAY, MAY 25, 1900.

### THE QUEEN.

To say anything to the people of Victoria in the nature of an appeal to them to remember the life and glorious record of Her Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria would be superfluous. To-day she has completed her eighty-third year, a life of more than unusual length and one burdened with the gravest responsibilities, which she has discharged in a manner that will make her name ever memorable in the history of this realm. Her Majesty's life is a lesson to humanity. At a very early age it became evident that she would in all human probability be called upon to wear the crown, and her education was carefully directed so as to fit her for the arduous and weighty duties which would devolve upon her. It was not expected that the burden of Empire would rest upon her shoulders at as early a day as this, for she was only a young girl on that memorable night when she was awakened from her sleep and informed that she was Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and all its dependencies. Fortunately she was surrounded by wise counsellors, and the natural timidity of youth, combined with a great deal of good, practical common sense, which she has exhibited at all times, led her to follow their advice in all things, and though always mindful of the personal dignity which ought to surround a sovereign, she never forgot for an instant that she was a constitutional monarch. Her Majesty was very happy in the choice of a husband. Albert, Prince Consort, was a man of sterling qualities. He occupied a very extraordinary position in the body politic. He was the husband of the Queen, and as such he had no constitutional status whatever, but it was useless to deny that he of necessity stood in advisory capacity towards the Queen. He filled his difficult position in a manner which gained him the esteem and respect of the people of the kingdom, and his early death was greatly lamented.

Left alone, Her Majesty found herself confronted with very different problems. She had now reached an age when her judgment had been ripened, and she assumed the responsibilities attaching to her exalted office in a manner that has contributed in a very material way to the formulation of the policy of the Empire, and to the maintenance of friendly relations with other powers. This is not the place to review Her Majesty's record in detail. Suffice it to say that she has made for herself a place among the list of British sovereigns which is equalled in all respects by none of her predecessors. Under her gracious sway the principles of constitutional, responsible government have reached the most perfect development attained in any country in the world.

In her private life Her Majesty has been exemplary. She has lived in "the fierce light that beats about a throne," and not only has not the breath of scandal ever attached to her name, but by example and precept she has done much to make the moral tone of the community higher and purer. To the wives and mothers, not only of the Empire, but of the whole civilized world, Her Majesty has set a conspicuous example. It is said that no one can measure the influence of a good woman, and how much more can that be said of one who occupies the position of head of a great Empire. When in the fulness of time the Queen passes within the veil to her reward, her greatest glory will not be because of her acts as a sovereign, but because of her record as a woman, wife and mother. This is really the crowning glory of her life. No one can tell how many of her acts as Queen were due to her own views, and how much to the advice of her ministers, but her private life, in the strength and purity of its example, is due to her innate nobility of character. As Tennyson has said, she is "loyal to the royal in herself." Here is a truly royal nature, and it has never failed to point out the wisest course to follow in cases of emergency.

And so when we say, "The Queen, God bless her," we express a sentiment that will be echoed all around the world, and nowhere more from the heart than in this city which bears her honored name.

### THE WAR.

A Capetown despatch of the 21st announced that British troops had arrived at Vereeniging, captured 27 locomotives and found the bridge across the Vaal intact. There has been no confirmation of this, and although it is very circumstantial, we hesitate about believing it. The station mentioned is in the Transvaal and north of the Vaal river, and if we have a force there, we are between the Boer army and Pretoria, and have cut off a retreat by rail. This is news of considerable importance, that as no reference has since been made to it in the despatches, we fear it is not reliable. Moreover, we do not know what force has had time to cover the distance to Vereeniging from any point where any of our columns has been reported.

Gen. Hamilton advanced from Lindley to Heilbron, leaving the latter to Gen. Buller, as we suggested he would. At Heilbron he was 55 miles northeast of Kroonstad and 45 southeast of the crossing of the Vaal. He was 35 miles from Hoising Spruit station, whence Lord Roberts sent his telegram yesterday morning. His column is converging on the line of advance of the main army.

Gen. French has moved off to the north-west of the railway line, and has crossed the Rhenoster river. This brought him due west of the main Boer position, and perhaps five miles nearer than Hamilton. If the enemy had intended to resist the advance, our forces were so close upon him that the defeat inflicted would have been a crushing one, but the Boers did not wait, and when Roberts reached the Rhenoster river he found they had retired. The forecast in his morning's despatch that French's movement had rendered the Boer position untenable was fully borne out.

### MR. DUNSMUIR'S PROMISE.

Speaking at South Wellington on Monday evening, Mr. Dunsmuir gave his word to the large audience present that he would replace his Chinese miners by white men as soon as the latter could be obtained. On Tuesday night he supplemented this by saying that as soon as other industrial enterprises ceased to employ Chinese abroad, he would do the same, and thus make the vast enterprise with which he is associated the great hives of white labor. These are the most important statements so far as Vancouver Island is concerned, that have been made in a long time. They will be hailed with profound satisfaction by the public generally.

Mr. Dunsmuir is planning mining operations on a gigantic scale. We sometimes hear of Extension mines spoken of in Victoria, but very few of us have the least idea of the vast work that has been done there in less than two years. This is only the beginning of his enterprise in that part of the Island. Just as he was not content with the great establishment at Comox, which he perfected after a busy brain of his father, who planned it was no longer here to counsel and direct, so now he has taken the mines at Extension, so Mr. James Dunsmuir is not satisfied with making the latter one of the greatest coal mines in the world, but has already begun the preliminary work on a still greater enterprise, not many miles distant, where he has reason to believe the largest coal field yet discovered on Vancouver Island is to be found. It will make all the difference in the world to this Island whether these great works are carried on by Oriental labor or by white workmen. Even if the former were employed as extensively as at present in the mines, the commercial benefit to the country would be very great indeed, but if Mr. Dunsmuir is able to give work in these places only to around his white workmen, the communities which will be not only an honor and glory to Canada, but a source of prosperity and wealth to merchants, tradesmen and farmers. The replacing of Chinese by white men in the coal mines is the first step in this direction, and it is to Mr. Dunsmuir's infinite credit that he has voluntarily promised to take it upon the heels of a decision by the highest court of the Empire that he has a perfect legal right to employ the Chinese in it so desires.

It is impossible to talk much with Mr. Dunsmuir without being impressed with the thought that he deeply realizes the responsibilities imposed upon him by his great wealth and business interests. He told the people at South Wellington on Tuesday night that he wished to get nearer to his employees, to come into closer touch with them, to learn what he could do for them, to endeavor to make their condition in life better and place within their reach means whereby their children could derive practical educational advantages. He did not say so, but it is true, nevertheless, that he has undertaken to fit up a laboratory at South Wellington, where free instruction in practical chemistry will be given by the superintendent of that colliery, Mr. Fisher. This is the beginning of a good and great work, and we are confident that as time goes round and other opportunities present themselves whereby, with the exercise of sound judgment and the expenditure of money, similar benefits can be conferred upon his employees, Mr. Dunsmuir will be prompt to avail himself of them.

We say, without any desire to be extravagant, that to-day in British Columbia there is no man upon whom greater responsibilities rest than upon Mr. James Dunsmuir, but at the same time, there is no one who has so great a power for good. That he will employ this power might we have the utmost confidence. By so doing, he will do more than gain temporary popularity, for that after all is a small thing. He will win the gratitude of thousands of men, women and children, which is a very much greater thing. He will contribute to the building up of strong industrial communities, which is a still greater thing. He will have the satisfaction of being known as a man who has done his duty to himself and his fellow-men, which is the greatest thing of all.

### THE CHINESE QUESTION.

The promise made by Mr. James Dunsmuir in his election-card to remove from his coal mines all Chinamen as soon as he can fill their places by white men, coming on the heels of the judgment of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, declaring anti-Chinese legislation unconstitutional, and the disallowance of anti-Japanese legislation by the Privy Council, is not only very timely to his credit, but of more than ordinary importance, for it will settle one phase of the Chinese question in a most satisfactory manner. There remains the larger question to be dealt with, namely, of future Chinese exclusion, and this cannot be dealt with by the local legislature, but only by the Federal or the Imperial parliament. We do not say that the local legislature cannot to some extent advance the cause of Oriental exclusion by the passage of

strong resolutions on the subject, but this is as far as it can go. The other night, at South Wellington, Mr. W. W. B. McInnes said that he could frame a law to prevent Chinamen from working in mines and the courts would hold it good. Conceding, if one wishes to, that Mr. McInnes can do this, he will only have touched the very margin of a great question. We do not believe he could do anything of the kind, but if his appreciation of the question of Mongolian immigration is limited to their working in coal mines, he has a very narrow conception of it. The question goes far beyond the mere local issues involved in it. It is radical in its importance, for if the flood gates of Oriental immigration are kept open, the country will soon be overrun with Chinese and Japanese, and white labor will either be driven out altogether or be forced to compete with men who work for wages upon which white men cannot live. This is a matter of vital importance to the future of the country, and it is the most important question in relation to the future of the Empire, which its great resources and its geographical position entitle it to. It must be a country of white men. This view of the case, which is a reasonable view and one that can be sustained by argument, must be brought home to the people of Canada, and the proper place to do so is in the halls of the Canadian parliament. We can understand how the Oriental labor question can be of vital issue in a Federal campaign, but not how it can be in a Provincial contest.

### LABOR CANDIDATES.

There are several "labor" candidates before the people of British Columbia seeking election to the legislature. The Colonist is rather favorably disposed to the idea that the labor organizations should be represented in the legislature, provided the candidate who seeks to be returned as such is sound in his principles on other points. If, however, he is simply a Socialist, seeking to overturn existing institutions and try experiments in legislation, it would be a great mistake, in their own interests, for the workingmen to select him. The interests of wage-earners are in the direction of conservative, not experimental, legislation. When the laws are settled and the business community knows from one year to another the conditions under which business can be carried on, employment is steady and wages are good, but when uncertainty prevails the fate of the wage-earner is uncertain. It is upon the wage-earner that the burden of experimental legislation falls most severely. The capitalist is usually in a position to shut down his works when conditions do not suit him; but the wage-earner is not in a position to do without employment. Take the case of the eight-hour law in Kootenay. Upon whom did the chief burden of that legislation fall? Not upon the capitalist who had invested money in the mines. Does any one suppose that the mine owners lived any the less well, bought fewer clothes or had to move into smaller houses because the mines were shut down? Not at all; they were not dependent upon their money investments for their daily living expenses. Their interests are diverse. A man having a good deal invested in a mine, and who has a mine does not pay, he is out so much, but his business goes on just the same in other respects. With the mine the case is different. When the mine shuts down his living is gone. He suffers immediately, and he suffers severely. The capitalist will refuse to do any further in enterprises that do not pay, but there are always hundreds of other chances. The miner has only his one chance, namely, that some one will employ him, and if he loses this, his condition is arduous in the extreme. This illustrates what we mean by saying that the effect of experimental legislation falls most heavily upon the wage-earner. Hence also we claim that the interests of the wage-earner lie in the direction of conservative legislation, using the word in its dictionary sense, as opposed to experimental. We believe the workmen of British Columbia can be got to see this and that they will refuse to follow the demagogues and hot-heads who desire to get into the legislature for the purpose of inflicting upon the province some of their ill-considered fads by giving effect to them in statutes. By so doing, he will do more than gain temporary popularity, for that after all is a small thing. He will win the gratitude of thousands of men, women and children, which is a very much greater thing. He will contribute to the building up of strong industrial communities, which is a still greater thing. He will have the satisfaction of being known as a man who has done his duty to himself and his fellow-men, which is the greatest thing of all.

### MINING LAWS.

One of the provisions of the laws of 1899 which gave the greatest amount of dissatisfaction was that which gave the Government the right to cancel the license of any mine corporation seeking to do business under the Placer Mining Act. By the law of that session no joint stock company or mining corporation can receive a free miner's certificate except by the express sanction of the government, and the right to hold such a certificate is subject to cancellation at any time by the government. That is to say, the government, by this statute, arrogated to itself the right to say who might and who might not organize companies to work placer ground, and to stop them from working whenever it saw fit. No investor is safe for a single moment under such a law. His investment is absolutely under the control of the government and may be rendered wholly valueless without notice and without any reason being given.

So monstrous is this law that we think it well to restate it, so that there may be no misunderstanding about it. Suppose a number of persons wished to form a company to work a hydraulic mine, they could not move hand or foot without the express permission of the government, and after they had finally obtained this, their whole enterprise would be liable to be terminated at the mere whim of the government. Can anything more outrageous than this be suggested? What man would think of investing money under such a law? Is there any cause for surprise that capitalists stood agast when they heard that such a law had been placed on the statute book?

For this legislation Mr. Martin is directly responsible. He himself planned the law. He forced it through the house in spite of the resistance of the opposition. He has promised to make changes in other statutes enacted under his supervision, but he has made no promise in relation to this. Can the people of British Columbia afford to allow such arbitrary power to be vested in any government, much less in one led by a minister of Mr. Martin's character, a man of such extreme views—one so hasty in action, one who does not hesitate to use his

powers for objects which cannot be claimed to be wholly in the public interest? The passage of such a law shows better than anything else Mr. Martin's ideas of legislation and how utterly untrue it would be to entrust such a man with the reins of power. It alone is a sufficient reason why the voters of British Columbia should refuse to sanction his selection as premier, whether British Columbia needs a law for the regulation of mining that treat every one alike and under which government favoritism can acquire no privileges which opponents of the government cannot. But under the statute referred to the government has the power to grant everything to its friends and refuse everything to its opponents, and it can hold a threat of cancellation over the head of any company. Such a law is contrary to the principles of our institutions and ought to be stricken from the statute book without delay, and the man responsible for it should be driven from public life.

### ATLIS MATTERS.

The facts brought out at yesterday's meeting of the Board of Trade in regard to Atlis are of very great importance and demand the immediate attention of the government and legislature. We shall deal with them at greater length in a future issue. For the present we invite the careful perusal of the report of yesterday's proceedings. Mrs. Hitchcock's indictment of the government is very strong, but it is none too severe. To take money over and over again for the same piece of ground would be a fraud if committed by a private individual, and is a moral fraud when committed by a government. Greater security of title to place claims is imperative, and the law should be so amended as to provide for it. The remoteness of Atlis from the Capital renders conditions there peculiarly arduous. Dishonest men can take advantage of the remoteness of the courts and the lack of authority on the part of local officials, and do very great injury before they can be checked. 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