

The Colonist.

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THE SEMI-WEEKLY COLONIST

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DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE

The Victoria branch of the Vancouver Island Development League was formally organized yesterday by the election of Mr. H. Goulding Wilson as President and of other officers, who will doubtless be very active in the work of the League justly their selection. The choice of Mr. Wilson for the position of President was in many respects a very happy one.

He represents the younger generation of business men, is energetic, clear-headed, and has strong convictions, a good faculty of expressing himself and an excellent man in council.

By this formal organization the provisional executive committee is terminated and this is a fitting occasion to express appreciation of the excellent work done by the gentlemen constituting it. Mr. Prior is now ought to be made to Mr. Simon Leiser, who has as President of the Board shown a keen interest in the movement, and has devoted great energy and much valuable time to the preliminary steps in the organization of the League. Mr. Prior is another member of the committee, who was ever ready to discharge every duty in his power in this regard. Indeed all the members of the provisional executive did excellent service for the city and the auspicious movement of the public movement is due very largely to their public-spirited efforts.

NAVAL DEFENCE.

The position taken by the Victoria Board of Trade in regard to naval defence is wholly in line with the views which find acceptance in other quarters. We take the following from the Illustrated London News:

Those who are talking so much about the necessity for building more Dreadnoughts seem to have forgotten the dock question, and it is asked whether, if we build more Dreadnoughts, as of course, we shall, we have sufficient dock accommodation for them. According to Fighting Ships the British Dreadnought class are as follows: In the new extension at Devonport and Keyham, 3 dry docks; at Portsmouth, 1 dry dock; at Chatham, 1; at Malta, 2; at Sydney, 1; at Hauboulville entrance, 1; at Simon's Bay, Cape of Good Hope, 1 building. These are the official docks. Of British private docks of this class at home there are nine.

No argument is necessary to show how essential a large dock at present is to the completion of the chain of such facilities available to the British fleet in other parts of the world. The Atlantic coast seems to be provided for, a dock at Bermuda and another at Halifax being sufficient, one would suppose, for all practical purposes. It will be observed that the Bermuda dock is a floating one. Floating docks have advantages, they are relatively cheaper than graving docks, and as they can be built in sections, they can be used for two or more small vessels or one of the largest class.

In another part of today's paper will be found a letter from Mr. Hebecker, and an article from the Daily Mail on this subject.

On the other point dealt with by the Board of Trade, namely the establishment of plants for building steel ships, we note a favorable disposition on the part of several eastern contemporaries. The case as presented by them is very well epitomized in the following extract from the Canadian Courier:

Canada's greatest shipyards today are on the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, whereas they should be in the Maritime Provinces. Great steel ships of the modern type are built on salt water, not on fresh water. If Canada is to have a steel ship industry worthy of the name, that sort of manufacturing must be done on the Atlantic coast.

The Dominion government should establish, or encourage a private company to establish, a great shipyard at Brunswick, where the steel and coal so profusely produced in the Atlantic provinces could be utilized. This could be done by offering to place a vessel in order for a complete battleship with any firm undertaking to create and maintain a fair-sized industry of this character. Halifax would be the natural place for the first yard of this kind, since it possesses a graving dock of large proportions and several marine railways. The graving dock is not essential, but it is of prime importance in the matter of ship repairs and general overhauling.

Perhaps we cannot construct steel ships as cheaply as they do at Belfast, on the Tyne or on the Clyde, but the difference in price would be but a temporary adverse argument. If Canada is to be national in its development and self-sustaining in its ultimate condition, a beginning in the construction of ocean vessels, merchant or naval, must be made. Now seems to be an opportune time for an experiment along these lines.

Mr. Norman Patterson writes to the Courier favoring the adoption of a policy which will encourage the building of steel ships, and he gives some interesting facts in connection. We draw attention to the existence on Vancouver Island of all the natural advantages claimed for Halifax. We have the iron ore, the coal, the advantage of "a harbor of refuge" unsurpassed on the shores of any oceans. We reproduce Mr. Patterson's argument, although it is somewhat long, in order that Colonist readers may compare conditions in Nova Scotia with those existing here, and possibly may derive thereby some inspiration to labor for the accomplishment of results here which seem to be in sight in the eastern province.

To consider the situation more in detail, Halifax has many advantages. In the first place, it is the best naval harbor on the Atlantic coast. From all these advantages it is the head of Bedford Basin is about fourteen miles and ships once in that harbor can be protected by coast defences and forts from attack by opposing vessels. The entrance to the harbor is already well protected by the best armed fortresses in Eastern Canada. The British government has spent much money on these forts and their armaments. Nature created this harbor of refuge; the British government has added the fortifications. When the town was originally built, a large portion of the water front was reserved as a dockyard and there is plenty of accommodation for both shipbuilding and ship repairing. The inside of the harbor is easy of access at all times; the tides are not high; the water is of uniform depth; there is good holding ground for anchorage; there is a graving dock, 600 feet in length, capable of taking in the largest vessel; there are several marine railways and much subsidiary equipment. Further, Halifax is the natural spot at which to build ships. Ship-building was once Nova Scotia's great industry. The vessels built in the great wooden vessels. Even yet, wooden vessels are built in considerable numbers. Some steel vessels have been constructed there, though not in Halifax. A shipyard for steel ship-building would be a natural development for Halifax, nevertheless. The Nova Scotia Steel & Iron Company have plants close at hand. From them the steel, or at least a great deal of it, could be procured. There is at least one Nova Scotia firm making engines who would be able to supply much of the necessary machinery. There is plenty of coal close at hand.

All that is required is that the government of Canada should announce that it will place an order for three or five war vessels to any firm which will establish a steel shipyard at Halifax, and some British firm of shipbuilders would be willing to undertake the work. These vessels could be constructed on a commission basis, as the large White Star boats are built by Harland & Wolff at Belfast. This shipyard with one war vessel a year to deliver would also be in a position to make steel vessels for the merchant marine and to repair any vessel, merchant or naval, which would require attention. This plan is a not an unattractive one. It has been advocated and both the city of Halifax and the province of Nova Scotia have standing offers of a bonus for such an undertaking.

A policy which would lead to such results as are discussed above would be in keeping apparently with the best opinion of the British people. The London Times of April 2nd deals with "The Dominions and Imperial Sea Power." It begins by saying that the recent avowal of the overtures of the Dominions to the necessity of co-operation with the Mother Country is even more significant than their avowal of the South African war, and is "a splendid manifestation of Imperial solidarity."

The presentation by New Zealand of a Dreadnought to the Imperial Fleet, the urgent popular demand manifested both in Canada and elsewhere for a similar offer on the part of the State or Federal governments or else for the construction of private docks for the South African war, and is "a splendid manifestation of Imperial solidarity." We quote: "We cannot but be struck by the fact that the presentation of a Dreadnought to the Imperial Fleet, the urgent popular demand manifested both in Canada and elsewhere for a similar offer on the part of the State or Federal governments or else for the construction of private docks for the South African war, and is "a splendid manifestation of Imperial solidarity."

The Times thinks there are doubts about the manner in which the governing Dominions can co-operate with the Mother Country. Of the resolution of the Canadian Parliament it says "It represents a decision to prosecute a continuous and self-reliant policy, more valuable than the warmest outbursts of spasmodic enthusiasm." It notes with great satisfaction that Australia has already given evidence of her determination to maintain a force of her own, which is to consist of seven destroyers and sixteen River-class destroyers. Of the gifts of Dreadnoughts, it says:

We need not say that, if these gifts are decided upon, we shall welcome them with pride and gratitude, not in any way as detracting from the European burden which Great Britain herself is fully competent and fully determined to bear, but as proof of the confidence in an unconvertible form that the Dominions are with Great Britain in her resolve to maintain her supremacy at sea and to resist the domination of any rival power. The effect of such a demonstration at the present moment cannot be estimated too high. But for the future interest will centre more and more upon the local naval services which Australia and Canada are preparing to develop. That is the channel in which the main stream of national opinion in both countries has for some time been clearly disposed to run. The Canadian resolution passed this week follows closely the memorandum presented by Canadian ministers to the Imperial Conference of 1902. The Australian programme is based on a current of opinion which showed its strength in the Australian debates upon the Naval Agreement of 1903, and which has gathered volume with every succeeding year.

The Times thinks that "the sea-power of the Empire must ultimately be maintained by all the Dominions in the world's interest. It regards it as but for the present it regards it as the special care of the Home Government. We fear this article is rather too long, but it can hardly fail to be of great interest to all who are endeavoring to reach a proper appreciation of the relative duties of the various parts of the Empire in the matter of naval defence.

ORIENTAL COMPETITION

Mr. Moreton Frewen's addresses to the Canadian Clubs in Ottawa and Montreal have caused some discussion in the newspapers as to the danger of Oriental competition in manufactures. It will be remembered by Colonist readers that Mr. Frewen's point is that by reason of the depreciation in the value of the money metal of the Orient and the appreciation of prices in countries using the gold standard, and also because of the vast natural resources of China and the abundance of unskilled labor, Chinese manufacturers can produce goods cheaply that they may be able not only to check our exports to Asia but will successfully compete in our home markets. He suggests that some Western Captain of Industry will organize the latent forces of China and conquer the industrial world. The Ottawa Citizen recognizes the danger of the competition, but thinks it can be met by protective tariff. To us this seems as a poor expedient, and one that would be of necessity local. The question is not "How could Canada keep out the products of Chinese labor when once it is properly organized and directed to the utilization of the vast store of raw materials found in that Empire, but how could the displacement of all human industry be met. Possibly Mr. Frewen has not hit upon the remedy, but certainly the Citizen's plan of a high tariff would be absolutely useless. Our Ottawa contemporary would have to convince the world that it would be necessary to wall out China from every country, just as some years ago all countries were walled out of China. The Montreal Witness thinks that "until the European can live as cheaply as the Chinese, the Orient raises a standard to that of the European, the danger of the world's industries gravitating to the East will continue. It thinks the attempt to raise the price of silver would be financially disastrous. We assume that our Montreal European degenerate hopes to see the standard of living, and hence that remedy for the gravitation of the world's industries must be eliminated from the discussion. The alternative is the elevation of the Asiatic standard. If we understand the case at all, that is one of the objects which Mr. Moreton Frewen hopes to attain by the restoration of silver to the value which it has before its demonization. Whether the means is equal to the accomplishment of such an end is another matter; but it seems very obvious that if we keep an increasing price in Occidental countries and in depreciating prices in Oriental countries, when expressed in terms of our currency, we are giving the Occidental producers an advantage which it is hopeless for us to try to overcome.

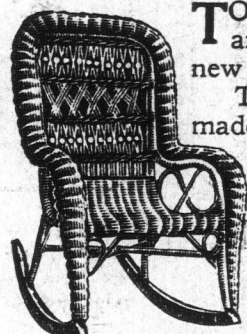
THE EMPRESS.

Those persons who were at the Empress's Monday evening, on the occasion of the flower show, will appreciate the question asked by a lady present. "What," she said, "did we do before this hotel was built?" Sometimes we wonder if the people of Victoria realize the changes that have come about during the last few years. Newcomers, of course, cannot appreciate those of us who recall the days of the evil-smelling tide flats, the trumpey bridge, the steamers Utopia, North Pacific, Princess Louise and Yosemite, will agree with us in saying that the advent of the Canadian Pacific to Victoria has been a wonderful thing. How many people know that we have finer steamers plying between this city of 40,000 people and another city of 70,000, finer than those which ply between New York and the cities within a similar or even greater radius? How many people realize that the scene in the Empress on Monday night could only be equalled at a few places in America? To come to Victoria on such ships as the Princess of Charlotte and Princess Victoria and to be taken to such an hotel as the Empress must produce an impression upon visitors, the value of which can hardly be expressed in money. We suppose we are correct in assuming that during the coming summer to be a scene of much brightness. Thousands upon thousands of visitors will stay there.

It is not only the city which ought to be an effort on the part of the city authorities and the citizens individually to make the town look as well as possible. It would be a pity if the good impressions produced by the voyage to the city and the Empress should be destroyed by the general appearance of the city. And this observation holds good in respect to visitors, whether they stay at the Empress or at one of the other of the excellent hotels throughout the city. Victoria is very well provided with good homes for the accommodation of the travelling public. We do not suppose there is anywhere a town of its size better equipped in this respect. We make special reference to the Empress because it stands in a class by itself from the standpoint of appearance and fitness for social functions, and because it is representative of the new era which began in Victoria on the day the citizens resolved to replace the old James Bay bridge by the present embankment.

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REED ROCKERS, at \$5.50 and..... \$5.00
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TODAY we are showing for the first time some fine Reed Rockers and are offering splendid values in these chair styles. We also have some new arrivals in Arm Chairs, Reception and "Occasional" Chairs in Reed. The construction of these chairs is a "feature" worth while. They are made to withstand lots of real hard wear—built to last. So often cheap reed chair styles shake to pieces quickly, rockers are cut in such a manner as to make the chair tilt to an uncomfortable angle. All these disagreeable features are eliminated in these chairs, and at the prices we believe that you'll agree they are about the best values in the city.

We also have some fine new arrivals in Reed Arm Chairs, Reed Reception Chairs, and in "Occasional" Chairs.

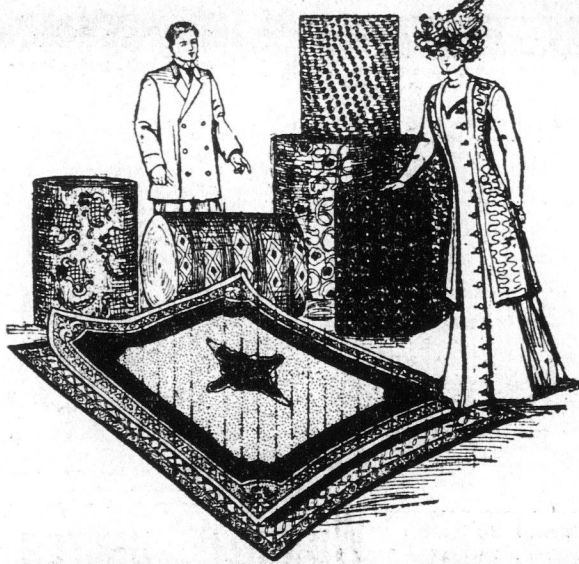
REED RECEPTION CHAIRS, at each, \$10.50
REED "OCCASIONAL" CHAIRS, each \$5.50

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IF YOU WANT to tone things up at little expense come in and see what we can offer you in handsome rugs and squares. This season's offerings in these lines have never been equalled in this city nor have the values offered ever been beaten.

We have an excellent range in the many different styles. In Brussels, in Axminsters, in Wiltons and all such squares you'll see the very latest the best British makers offer.

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WE BELIEVE we have anticipated every possible requirement in the carpet way and in this stock we have gathered for Spring business can satisfy your every demand.

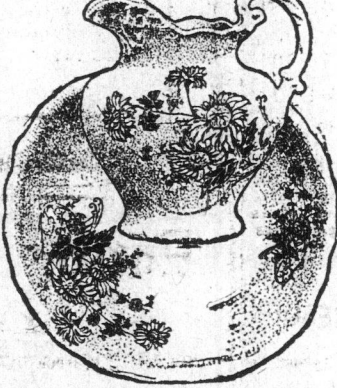
Give us an opportunity to show you some of our attractive Spring carpets, and let us discuss with you your carpet requirements.

We believe that we can save you money on your carpet purchases and would greatly appreciate an opportunity to go into the matter with you.

Second floor.

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These are the "left over" sets from our best selling lines, and as we need the room we are clearing out all these odd sets.

This is a splendid opportunity to secure a toilet set or two for your summer cottage—stylish sets too, for these are dainty. Shapes are new and the decorations artistic.

Come in and let us show you the fine values we offer at—

\$3.50, \$4.50 and \$5.00



Wedding Gifts



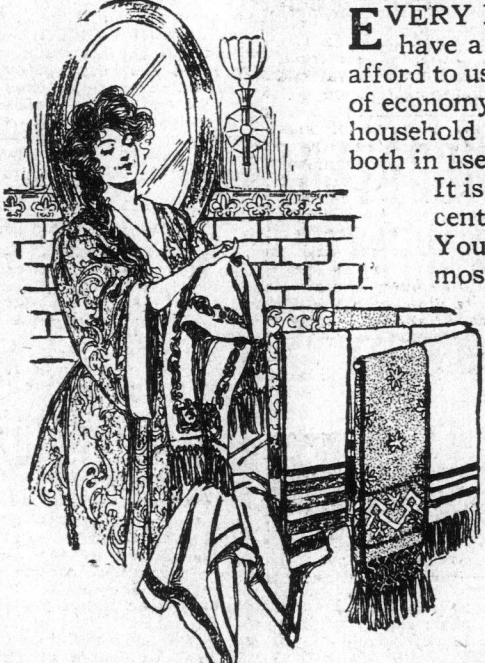
COME IN and see the wealth of beautiful wedding gifts this store offers those looking for a happy solution of the problem.

We have a store full of suitable articles, articles every bride must have, articles she will appreciate.

Prices on these are most reasonable and your appropriation can be spent to better advantage here than elsewhere.

DON'T YOU NEED MORE TOWELS?

Here Are Some Fine Values in Good Towels



EVERY HOME must have towels—should have a big supply, but every home cannot afford to use cheap towels. It's the poorest sort of economy to purchase cheap towels, for what household article is subjected to harder wear both in use and in the laundry, than the towel?

It is poor economy, indeed, to save a few cents per dozen and sacrifice quality. You'll find our prices on towels compare most favorably with any quoted, and if you'll just investigate you'll find the quality is "Weiler Quality"—the best.

We shall be pleased to show you some excellent values in towels if you'll just visit our second floor. And when you are on this floor you'll see much to interest you in the new Spring Curtain Materials, Lace Curtains and Carpets. Today would be an excellent day to make a visit.

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LINEN HUCK TOWELS, from, per dozen..... \$2.25

TURKISH TOWELS, from, per dozen..... \$2.75

RUDDRY TOWELS, from, each..... 40¢

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