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VICTORIA, TUESDAY, DEC. 1, 1891.

A QUESTION OF POLICY.

In spite of what the Vancouver *World* and other journals locally interested in depreciating Victoria may have said, the fact of the steamship San Pedro having been wrecked so near to port can, in no sense, be regarded as in any way detracting from the safety of this harbor. As is well understood by seagoing men, the channel and approaches are so well defined that it can only be by utter ignorance or errors of judgment that, outside of what may be termed an utter unforeseeable casualty, dangers can exist. As to the whys and the wherefores of the present accident the official inquiry will, no doubt, bring out the facts and if, as has been hinted, a short cut was taken for the purpose of saving time, it will be for those concerned to explain and make out the best case possible. Meantime it will be well for those who have a fancy for and are interested in running down Victoria to refrain from passing their strictures until they are in possession of all the facts.

Not unnaturally this disaster has brought prominently to the front the question of the relations between ourselves and the United States on the subject of dealing with vessels that have come to grief not in waters whose ownership is disputed; but in those where the best facilities for affording relief or of handling the wrecks were to be most easily had in a country to which they did not appertain. In connection with this matter many a good vessel and thousands of dollars worth of cargo have been lost, while only in a few cases have special arrangements been made with the authorities to enable foreign wreckers to be brought into requisition. Because it was not understood that in British Columbia there were facilities for carrying out this kind of business certain enterprising Americans—among them Capt. Whitelaw, of San Francisco—have, upon occasions come across the line, and made considerable money out of the salvages which were effected, but this was only by special acts of grace and favor on the part of the Federal authorities.

However, it is now known that in the steamer *Mascotte*, owned in Victoria, with all the facilities at her disposal, there is little, if any, need to obtain American help in order to deal with vessels which have become disabled and have foundered in our waters. Neverthe-

less, possibly because of his ignorance in this matter, or perhaps, because he commanded a vessel owned in the United States, Captain Hewitt of the San Pedro, has used his utmost endeavors to obtain permission to have American help. In doing so, he utterly ignored two facts, that there had been no loss of time in bringing to his attention, viz., that local parties were prepared to guarantee to raise the vessel and restore her to her former condition for a fixed sum, and that under circumstances like these the Government of his own country would upon no conditions make exceptions in favor of foreigners; and was, in fact, informed that he might hire and use free of duty appliances to raise the sunken vessel which cannot be obtained here. Meantime, the San Pedro lies under water, and anything that is perishable on board her is incurring additional damage. For all this, no doubt, there are those who will be disposed to hold the port of Victoria responsible. But it must be remembered that the Pedro was not coming here, that this was not her port of destination, and the responsibility, if any, of her going out of her course lay with the captain and pilot.

There are no lives in jeopardy on board the San Pedro, so that there is not this incentive to any extraordinary action or concession, and now if for the sake of sentiment or of reducing expense—which we do not believe—the owners are ready to risk the entire loss of their vessel, it is their own look-out. Foreigners are largely interested in the Union Mines, because of the money there is in them; they use their own vessels for the transport of their product; but they must remember that where what are termed the laws of nations do not prevail the law of the country is paramount. The San Pedro was wrecked in British Columbia (Canadian) waters. As is the case in the United States, the fiscal policy of the Dominion is that of protection, and, as far as it is possible for us to see, there is not the slightest ground for making any exception to the operation of the law in this case. The McKinley tariff and all the special enactments regulating transportation both by land and water were specially designed to place foreigners at the greatest disadvantage, and as far as Canada is concerned, some have said to drive us into the American Union. In this particular our policy is their own—though we are not looking to Washington—let them abide by its consequences. As the point has been expressed, "we'll hae oor ain fish guts for oor ain sea maws." Ours is "a national policy." While it is on the statute book, let us live up to it or have it repealed. Some of its features American unfriendliness, if not hostility, forced us to adopt.

SOUND SENSE.

According to the Montreal *Herald*, in a recent interview Mr. Templeman, of the *Times*, said: "There is a theory in the East as to the relative positions of Vancouver and Victoria which is altogether unfounded. Vancouver is not the metropolis of British Columbia in any sense, commercially or otherwise. As regards population, Victoria is the leading town on the coast by at least 7,000 souls; it is the busi-

ness capital, and is, in this respect, as in all others, without a rival. The city is really one of the phenomena of the continent. Its growth is not only rapid but substantial, and its future is full of hope. Its past success may be judged by the fact that in 20 years there has not been a single failure in any established business house." After this, comparisons are odious, and, in the words of the sage economist, there is almost "nuff said." Many people, indeed, every one in Victoria will be glad that Mr. Templeman availed himself of the opportunity of explaining matters that had been much misrepresented.

TRADE STATISTICS.

The Dominion exports for this year are keeping up well, although slightly behind 1890-91. For the four months ending October 31, they are valued at \$46,882,212, as against \$47,238,049.

The trade returns continue to show the effect which the Government's great reduction in taxation last session has had upon the revenue. The imports for the first four months of the fiscal year are valued at \$40,074,421, as against \$41,155,550, a decrease of a little over a million dollars. The duty collected in the same period amounted to \$6,734,001, as against \$8,579,718 last year, a decrease of \$1,800,000 in round figures.

The following is the statement of goods exported during October.

Produce of the mine.....	\$ 800,474
Produce of the fisheries.....	920,193
Produce of the forest.....	2,245,414
Animals and their produce.....	1,035,181
Agricultural products.....	4,256,458
Manufactures.....	711,810
Miscellaneous articles.....	45,652
Bullion.....	26,620
Coal.....	14,362

Total\$12,865,200

Of the foregoing, the produce of Canada amounted to \$12,160,704. The value of the exports in October, 1890, was \$12,038,421. The grand total of goods entered for consumption last month was \$9,525,493, and the duty collected \$1,518,273, as against \$10,118,955 and \$2,095,783.

It is understood that a bulletin on the subject of coffee, its growth, treatment and adulteration will shortly be issued by the Ottawa Government, one of whose Inspectors of Revenue has been making a careful study of the subject.

MANY people will remember the Exchange Bank, which had its headquarters in Montreal, had as its president Mr. Thomas Craig, and started out with a great flourish of trumpets. It went under, for one reason mainly, because its officials had been too liberal in affording accommodations to people who were really worse than bankrupt, because they actually traded for months, if not years, on the bank's assistance to keep their heads above water. It had been for some years in liquidation, and about two weeks since an auction of its remaining assets was held in the city of Montreal. The total value of the assets put up to competition was over a million dollars, for which one of the leading and most successful auctioneers of the city was able to obtain no more than \$4,700.