The Colonist.

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FARMERS AND LEGISLATION.

There is a growing tendency in this Province, which finds expression in the legislature and the press, to represent the farmers as being in a really deplorable condition. There is nothing particularly new in this sort of thing. It is time-worn if not time-honored. In every province of Canada and every state of the American Union, the same song has been sung over and over again, principally by the political party that happens to be out of power. We never hear anything of the poor down-trodden blacksmith, or the persecuted grocer, or the oppressed carpenter. They have their share of trials and tribulations, no doubt, but no one exploits them in the press or on the political platform. They must suffer without a champion. No political quack advertises his cure-alls for their ills; no social revivalist tells them what they must do to be saved.

The COLONIST yields to no one in a desire to see the agriculturrl interests of this Province advanced in every possible way. It recognizes in the fullest degree the incomparable value of agriculture to any community. Other industries for a time may overshadow it, but in the long run the welfare of every community depends upon the fruits of the soil. To make a more specific application of the idea, more depends upon the development of British Columbia agriculture even than upon the development of its mines. If the latter are fully exploited vast amounts of wealth will be created, but the Province will enjoy comparatively little benefit from it, unless the men who work in the mines are, as far as possible, clothed and fed from the products of British Columbia farms. If this can be done the most of the wealth will remain with us, for it costs a very large percentage of their value to produce the precious metals. If this is not done to a very much greater extent than at present, the precious metals and the greater part of what it costs to produce them will go to people outside of the Province, and when the day comes that our mines are exhausted, and it must necessarily come some time, the Province will be sucked dry like an orange.

It is therefore of the highest importance that everything should be done that can be done to advance the interests of agriculture in British Columbia, but we submit that the way to do this is not to keep the farmers in a state of unrest and dissatisfaction by telling them that the whole tendency of legislation has been to their disadvantage and by persuading them that they can be made prosperous by some trick of legislative legerdemain. It is as much a matter of business to grow the raw produce of the soil and market it in its best and most saleable form as it is to sell boots and shoes, can salmon or operate gold mines, and the principles which ensure success in the one will ensure success in the other. If any self-constituted saviour should set himself up to show the merchant, the artizan or the miner how he could be made prosperous, his talk would fall upon deaf ears. There is no royal road to success in farming. Industry, thrift and intelligent business methods will ensure success, and they alone will do so. Wherever in this Province or elsewhere farmers have adopted an intelligent plan of co-operation, and have carried it out honestly, they have found it pay. Co-operation in the disposal of farm products is simply the application of a business principle of proved value. It is co-operation that built up the great British commercial marine; co-operation is the basis of our banking system; co-operation by the change of only two letters becomes corporation, and the difference between co-operative plans and the great modern system of doing business through the means of corporations is no greater than that between the two words.

It is useless to talk about elevating the farming community from without. It must be elevated from within. This is not to say that there are not changes in the laws which would be advantageous to farmers and others, or that it is not possible for the legislature to do anything to benefit agriculture. Laws to facilitate and encourage co-operation, expenditure on roads and bridges to enable farmers to get to market more readily, importations of improved stock, lectures on practical subjects by practical men, are some of the methods by which this industry may be advanced. But primarily the farmers must depend upon themselves. It is wrong to mislead them into supposing that the legislature can do for their industry what it can do for no other.

THE PACIFIC CABLE.

The proposed Canada-Australia cable, of which so much was said last year, has been allowed to drop out of sight. We hope this does not mean that there has been any halt in the negotiations, as there is really no time to be lost if we are to have direct cable communication from our shores to the Australian colonies. We have information of a private character to the effect that an effort is being made to give Australia the desired all-British telegraphic connection by means of a line which will cross the Southern portion of the Indian Ocean to the Cape of Good Hope, and there is a prospect that this may be pushed through successfully. It is certainly in such a shape as to seriously menace the Pacific route, for we take it that if the Australian colonies can be induced to give their aid to the route via the Cape the laying of a line to Canada will be indefinitely postponed.

Under these circumstances we submit to the Dominion government that it becomes an important duty to press forward the negotiations with the Australian governments with the greatest possible speed. Hitherto most of the negotiations have been with the Imperial authorities. It may be taken for granted that the home government is prepared to do its duty in the premises as soon as the colonial governments interested have agreed as to the responsibility to be assumed by them respectively. It might be desirable for the British Columbia legislature to pass a resolution on the subject to be forwarded to the Ottawa ministry. Whatever is best calculated to expedite the construction of the Pacific cable should be done at the earliest possible day. Canada at large, and British Columbia particularly, have much to hope from this cable.

THE FIRST CHAPTER OF GENESIS

It is undoubtedly possible to find some subject upon which Chaucer, Shakespeare, Addison, Macaulay and Rudyard Kipling have said something. If paragraphs were taken from what these several writers have written upon such subject and made into a continuous narrative, without altering the language or phraseology, any schoolboy would know that the result was a composite production representative of different eras in British literary history. For some time the composite character of parts of the Hebrew scriptures has been recognized, and very recently the result of investigations into some chapters of Genesis has been printed in colored text, different colors representing different eras in Jewish history. From this it appears that the chapters examined contain internal evidence that portions of them were written at different dates extending over a period of three or four centuries. While this discovery may compel the abandonment of the belief still cherished by many people, that Moses or some other writer composed the whole book of Genesis directly under divine inspiration—a claim which was never made until long after the beginning of the Christian era—it does not in the least detract from the value of the Scripture narrative. If all the writers through several centuries on early British history should agree as to certain statements of facts, we would accept their agreement as furnishing strong presumptive evidence as to the reliability of those statements. So when we find the scholars of the Hebrew race during several centuries in accord as to certain statements of fact, their agreement of itself possesses value as evidence of that fact.

Not very long ago, when critics began to examine the Hebrew Scriptures and compare them with other historical manuscripts and the revelations of science, the strongest kind of a protest went up from the churches, and a gleeful chorus was raised by those people, who were anxious to see the authority of the sacred canon dethroned. We suppose that more cheap criticisms and cheaper witticisms have been launched against the Book of Genesis than against any other literary production that the world has ever seen. Enough has been said and written against it to consign any other book that ever was printed to everlasting oblivion. The one-thousandth part of one per cent of that which has been said against Genesis drove the poems of Ossian from every library shelf.

The result of the higher criticism, as it is called, is to place the Book of Genesis upon a new and really loftier plane than that which mediæval ignorance assigned to it. Take for illustration the first three verses of the book. They give us this sequence:

In the beginning, God.
Matter in chaotic form.
Motion.
Light.

It is true that the language used is that of lofty imagery. We are told that the Spirit of God moved amid chaos and at His command came light. Science, reasoning, backward finds evidence of the three latter stages of the sequence and presents the result in the nebular theory of creation. It cannot reach the first step in the sequence, because it deals only with matter. Its tools are the balance, the yard-stick, the test tube, the telescope. But when we find that ancient wisdom had reached a stage in knowledge of material phenomena that enabled it to reduce the fundamental facts in cosmic history to such a demonstration that the poets of the day seized upon them and crystallized them in immortal verse, we need not apologize for accepting the greater proposition that before Creation there was a Creator who is immanent in all His works. This is the real lesson of the first chapter of Genesis, and though a hundred writers in a hundred different eras had contributed something to the story, the force of the lesson would not be weakened. Perhaps when modern science has grown wiser, perhaps when it has pierced the mysteries of creation a little more deeply, it may reach the conclusion formed by the sages whose deductions have been preserved in poetry for more centuries than we perhaps have any idea of.

The view entertained by some people that science has demonstrated that there is no necessity for accepting "the hypothesis of God" is a mistaken one. Herbert Spencer went as far as anyone in this direction, and all he said was that he thought he perceived in matter all that was necessary for the evolution of every phenomenon, including life and intelligence. Spencer was much too wise a man to suppose that science has spoken the last word on any subject whatever.

WATER RIGHTS.

"The Water Clauses Consolidation Act, 1897," is a very comprehensive measure, and as far as can be gathered from a necessarily superficial examination, seems to be well devised for the purposes which it is intended to serve. In an act of 155 sections, covering a subject with so many ramifications, it is to be expected that there will be some provisions the expediency of which is debateable, and it is to be assumed that the bill will call forth very full discussion and much keen criticism. This is highly desirable, for it is of importance that no measure of this nature—one affecting the investment of large sums of money as well as public and private rights—should go upon the statute book without all its features receiving the most searching investigation.

As a summary of the bill is given in another column, it is not necessary in this article to go at all into particulars, further than to say that it appears to be a successful attempt so to secure water rights to persons obtaining them as to make the investment of capital in plants of various kind perfectly secure, to provide against the monopolizing of such right to the disadvantage of the public, to preserve to municipal corporations the rights to obtain the use of water for municipal purposes upon terms that are reasonable, and to give the Province a revenue from the very valuable assets which its water privileges will prove to be. This bill is undoubtedly one of the most important that has been submitted to the legislature in many years, and its passage alone will give character to the work of the session.

BLACK SAND.

The result of the experiments with black sand taken from the Saskatchewan valley, described in yesterday's COLONIST in an article from the Edmonton Bulletin, if confirmed by further trials, may be very far reaching. All persons who have worked in placers know how the black sand remains after everything else but the gold has been washed away. It is very much heavier than other sands, and seems to have an affinity of some kind for loose gold, so much so as to suggest a common origin. Whether it is a disintegrated pyrrhotite ore or whether like other sands its origin must be regarded as one of the unsolved problems of geology, is a matter of speculation, but what we are most concerned with is whether it is profitable to smelt it. We have lately seen by the experiments with Le Roi ore that it is partly free milling. Is the black sand substantially identical with this ore, and have the slow processes of nature extracted from it the free gold? If the Le Roi ore is crushed to a fine sand we would have a product that would contain some free gold and some that could only be extracted by chemical process, i. e. by smelting. This is the case with the black sands of the Saskatchewan, as shown by the experiments referred to. The parallel is certainly a striking one.

The owners of placer mines in other places will no doubt make experiments similar to those which have produced such striking results in the Saskatchewan valley, and if they are found to be identical in their demonstration we shall witness a revolution in placer mining everywhere and many abandoned claims will be worked over again. It will be startling news to the old miners to learn that in throwing away the black saud they have been rejecting the richest part of their claims. There is no use in jumping to any conclusion hastily in this matter, but it will certainly be admitted that the possibilities suggested by the Saskatchewan experiments are of startling extent.

IT is said that some thirty schooners are outfitting on Puget Sound for the halibut banks in Hecate Strait. This Strait is the water lying between Queen Charlotte's Islands and the Mainland. At its northern end it is only twenty-four miles wide, and hence under the rules of international law is a closed sea. The United States government has always insisted upon this rule and enforces it in regard to the Duke of Clarence Strait, which lies between Prince of Wales Island and the Mainland, and is somewhat wider than Hecate Strait. The Quadra on her last trip North warned the American fishermen off the halibut banks, but there seems to be no intention on their part to pay any attention to this friendly intimation that they are in wrong. They seem to be determined upon continuing their poaching, and if so the Quadra will probably receive orders to make seizures. No one wants any more international squabbling, but as our American friends are so determined that foreigners shall be excluded from waters over which their government has territorial jurisdiction, they can have no cause to complain if they receive similar treatment in Canadian waters. The halibut fishery is of growing importance to the Sound fisherman in view of the market that is opening for the fish in the East, to which they are shipped in refrigerator cars. While our neighbors shut their doors against Canadian fish caught by Canadians, they cannot with reason complain if they are forbidden to fish in our waters. It is clearly the duty of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries to take prompt action in this matter.

NOTICE is given that Professor Andree will start from Stockholm about the last of June in his effort to reach the North Pole by balloon, and everybody in Canada is asked to be on the lookout for the venturesome gentleman in case the wind should blow him in our direction. It is desirable that word to this effect should be sent to the prospectors and Hudson's Bay men as well as to the Indians in Northern British Columbia. While speaking of this matter it may be interesting to mention that the original projector of polar exploration by means of a balloon was Commander Cheyne, R.N., a native of Fredericton, N. B., who some fifteen years or more ago made a long-continued effort to get money to enable him to attempt the feat. His plan was to establish four stations in the Arctic for at least a year, and study the course of atmospheric currents before embarking on his aerial voyage. He had made several visits to the Arctic and was very enthusiastic over polar exploration, which he said was attended with much less risk than African exploration. He attributed the failures which have occurred to either rashness, insufficient preparation or accidents. He used to say that Arctic climate is well understood, Arctic animals not to be dreaded and Arctic people friendly to strangers; but when a man went on a two years' cruise with provisions for six months he might expect to be hungry before he got home. The expeditions of Peary and Nansen bear out the Commander's views most completely.

GOLD is found in the Saskatchewan in black sand. At the present time it is washed out by a crude machine called a grizzley, and recently the yield has not averaged more than $1.50 for every six tons of gravel. When the bars were first worked they yielded about ten times as much as this. The miners have observed that when bars were abandoned they became auriferous again, the gold occurring in minute particles visible only by reason of their sparkle against the sand. Where the gold came from therefore became a question of great interest, and another was as to the source of the platinum found in connection with the gold. Someone suggested that it came from the black sand, and an assay of the sand which had passed through a grizzley was made. It was found to contain gold at the rate of $54 to the ton. Another assay showed $268 to the ton in gold and platinum out of sand from which all the free gold had been panned. The Edmonton Bulletin tells the story at considerable length and we reproduce the article elsewhere.

A QUESTION has arisen as to the right of the owner of land through which a brook flows to catch trout in the brook during the close season. The claim is made that fish in a stream on private land are the property of the man who owns the land, and being his he can take them when and how he chooses. We fancy that this doctrine must be accepted with much qualification. No property in the fish can be vested in the owner of the land. All he possesses is the right to take the fish and to keep anyone else from taking them. When he catches them they are his, and not before. Every owner of land along the stream has the same right. It would be very absurd to hold if a stream flowed over a hundred properties one of the owners might devise some plan of killing all the fish when they were swimming over his land.

THE house is now and has been for some time very hard at work. No very just estimate can be formed of the activity of the members from the length of the daily sessions, nor is it fair to compare this legislature with those of Eastern provinces to its disadvantage. On the first point it may be mentioned that a great amount of arduous work is being done by the committees and much more remains to be done. On the second point it may be observed that in a province like British Columbia, where new resources are being opened up, a great diversity of questions of a difficult nature constantly arise and they cannot be settled off-hand.

THE present visitation of snow seems part of a very widespread storm. The wind has not been especially stormy here, but down on the Sound the snowfall began with a furious gale, which kept all the smaller steamers at their berths. The winter on the whole has been very remarkable. Heavy snow and cold weather in November followed by heavy snow and cold weather in March must, we fancy, be almost if not quite unprecedented along this part of the coast since weather records have been kept. There has been colder weather later in March than we have been having. These late snows will be likely to delay the work of prospecting in the Spring for the snow in the mountains must be unusually deep.

THE Ottawa Citizen says the observations of the COLONIST as to the profitable character from a Dominion point of view of railway development in British Columbia is an argument against giving any aid at all to new roads. This is too sweeping an assertion altogether. It may be fairly urged against some lines, but not against others. There is a distinction between development and purely competing railways, which the party with which the Citizen has always been affiliated never failed to recognize. The former have always been admitted to be worthy of government assistance.

IT costs Great Britain $88,500,000 a year to maintain her army; France spends $101,000,000 on hers and Germany $118,320,000 on hers; while the United States pays out $144,000,000 in pensions on account of a war that ended thirty-two years ago, and her present military establishment costs $55,000,000 a year. The United States expends at the rate of $2,000 per man under arms; Great Britain, $640 per man; Germany, $195 per man and France, $176, not including pensions in either case.

THE Nelson Tribune with utter disregard of the truth asserts that Dr. George Duncan in order to ensure the election of Messrs. Earle and Prior, neglected his duties and allowed persons to go from the quarantine to vote. The Tribune has probably been misled by the falsehoods unblushingly told by a few soreheads in this city. The fact of the matter is that the "chicken-pox suspect" who was allowed to go out and exercise his franchise voted for Messrs. Milne and Templeman.

THE report that General Alger, Secretary of War in McKinley's cabinet, has invested in Canadian pulp works, if true, is worthy of more than passing consideration. It might be a good cue to act on.

BRITISH capital has come out to Canada for gold mines and now it is coming for whiskey. A few years ago it "annexed" most of the United States beer.

GLADSTONE has again declined a peerage, but is willing to accept one for his 12-year old grandson. "Gladstone" is title enough for any man.

WE can assure the Times that we do not consider readers of the COLONIST fools, but there are others.

THE CANADIAN PRESS.

OUR CLAIMS ON THE DOMINION.

British Columbia pays almost four times as much per head into the Dominion treasury as any other province and considerably more than it receives in return by way of subsidy and public works.—Rosslander.

THAT LE ROI ORE TEST.

This means that $10 ore, which now costs $10 to $11 per ton to smelt, and is consequently not treated, can be put through a mill with a loss of $3.50 per ton or less, leaving $6.50 or more to pay for mining and reduction. As at least $3 from each ton of such ore would be saved on the plates, it practically reduces the basis of treatment to the usual scale of costs incident to free-milling ores.—Rossland Miner.

LABOR IN ROSSLAND.

It is estimated that there are about 4,000 claims owned by prospectors who make Rossland their headquarters or purchased by development companies with head offices at Rossland upon which the $100 assessment work must be done this season, which totals $400,000. The recent successful test of the Le Roi low grade ore will almost assuredly result in the erection of at least 10 stamp mills in the immediate vicinity of this city, the erection of which and the extra amount to be paid out to miners and mill men on account of this method of reducing the abundance of silicious ores in the Rossland mining district will swell the wage bill of the camp by at least $600,000. It is safe to say, then, that $1,000,000 worth of work will be done this season by these two items alone.—Rossland Record.

THE COMPANIES ACT.

In order to prevent the flooding of the markets with promoters' stock in mining companies we would strongly favor a provision that all treasury shares should be so marked that any investor might be able to satisfy himself whether his money was going into development or merely into the promoters' pockets.—Rossland Miner.

THE C. P. R. AND KOOTENAY.

The company must have direct railway connections of its own, otherwise the greater part of the mining traffic will remain beyond its reach, and will continue to be carried by the American lines southward.—Manitoba Free Press.

AN OFFENSIVE PARTIZAN.

The Attorney-General of Manitoba has defined an offensive partizan to be "a partizan who is offensive to the party in power." Partizans who are very offensive to other parties not in power will have their turn by and by.—Calgary Herald.

BY WAY OF VARIETY.

"Now," said the experienced statesman to the newly-elected senator, whom he was instructing, "there is just one more point concerning senatorial courtesy to which I feel it my duty to direct your attention. It seems a little hard, but all dignities have their drawbacks." "What is it?" "It is considered very bad form when a colleague is delivering a speech to go to sleep without leaving the room."—Washington Star.

"What are they going to do with his remains?" "Goin' to cremate 'em." "Well, by gum, he allus did get the cream of everythin'"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Tradesman—You want a pair of slippers for your mother, eh. Do you know what size slippers she wears? Boy—Smallest ye got, boss; she wears 'em out on me.—Richmond Dispatch.

Mr. Dudleigh—Ah, Miss Du Million; I have come to press me suit, doncher know. Miss Du Million—You may be a goose, Mr. Dudleigh, but this is not a tailor shop.—Omaha World-Herald.

The Pastor—I don't see your husband at church any more. The Wife—No; he never goes now. "What's the matter?" "Why, you know, he's a vegeterian, and he says there's too much meat in your sermons to suit him."—Yonkers Statesman.

"There is no occasion for you to envy me," said the prosperous person. "I have as many troubles as you."

"I allow you do, mister," admitted Dismal Dawson; "but the difficulty with me is, that I ain't got nothing else."—Indianapolis Journal.

SALMO PLACER FINDS.

The new find of placer mines at Salmo and the recording of sixteen claims, word of which has been wired from Rossland, is in the Nelson mining division and situated in the centre of the Salmon river country. Salmo is easily reached by the line of the Nelson & Fort Sheppard railway, which traverses the whole length of the ground that is likely to prove auriferous.

Portions of the ground in and around Salmo were mined by the early pioneers and there are several of Victoria's prominent citizens, among them Lieut.-Governor Dewdney, Hon. G. B. Martin, Hon. C. E. Pooley and Dr. Powell, who could probably tell much of the mining on the Salmon in those early days.

A report of Edwin Hall Warner, a member of the American Society of C. E., who in May last examined the country with the view of increasing the water supply of Beaver creek for power purposes, in his report states that the "Beaver creek has its rise in the 'flat table land' which forms the divide between the Salmon and local Columbia drainage systems." Further on in the report he says: "Should commercial considerations warrant, the water supply could be largely increased at a very small expense," and he then says, "I examined the source of the creek for the purpose of determining the possibility of increasing the supply. From examination of the map of the diftrict I saw that under certain favorable conditions the waters of the North Fork of the Salmon could be diverted into Beaver creek. An examination of the ground revealed the fact that the conditions were much more favorable than I had hoped. There has been a large amount of prospecting in the Salmon river, Sheep creek and Lost creek districts, which has resulted in the discovery of mineral bearing veins. The future of these discoveries I do not venture to predict, but in my examination of the North Fork of the Salmon I had in view the possible need of power in mining operations. This need can best be supplied by . . . . bringing the waters to a point directly above (Salmon Siding) Salmo."

At the north end of the tract of land on the Salmon, the mountains approach the river, receding as they near the North Fork and closing in again further down the stream. The east boundary approximates very closely the foot of the mountain.

Taking Mr. Warner's report in conjunction with Field Hobbs & Co.'s map of the Salmon river, and the later surveys, it would appear that at one time the Salmon river must have flowed through Salmo nearly due west through the Beaver lakes, and emptied its waters into the Columbia river through Beaver creek, and not as now south, emptying into the Pend d'Oreille river. The whole nature of the ground bears out this assumption, from the fact that in and around Salmo the soil is sand and gravel, the wash of the Salmon. The extent of this placer discovery will probably be from two miles north of Salmo and four miles west. If the theory of the flow of the Salmon in its course having been at one time westward, then the old channel must have been from near Boulder creek north to and through Beaver lakes and meadow south and west as indicated. The convulsions of the earth causing the change must also have changed the course of the North Fork eastward. There is one other peculiar feature with reference to the North Fork which would further point to the fact of its course having been changed, which is that during the spring freshets the North Fork breaks into several streams at Salmo in its course to join the Salmon river. The probability is that when the snow is off the ground the miners will soon ascertain what the value of the discovery will amount to, as easy, rapid and cheap transportation and living affords them favorable opportunity.

For prevention of baldness, and to renew and thicken the growth of the hair, use Hall's Vegetable Sicilian Hair Renewer. Physicians endorse and recommend it.