

The Colonist.

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QUESTIONABLE POLICY

It seems to be understood that the right of the B. C. Electric Railway Company to haul freight through the city streets is to be the subject of appeal. We suppose it may be conceded that the duty of the legal advisers of the Aldermanic Board obliges them to present to that body such views of legal rights of the city and of persons or corporations holding concessions from the city as they in their judgment think proper; but it does not follow that the Aldermanic Board is bound always to act upon that advice. Perhaps the latter statement may be misunderstood. An Alderman once remarked to the Colonist that the City Council was bound to do a certain thing because the City Barrister said it was legal. This incident illustrates our point, which is only very rudimentary. It is that the legal officers of the city are the proper advisers of the Aldermanic Board as to matters of law, but are in respect to matters of policy in no way different from any of the citizens. Indeed, with all due respect to the legal profession, there is perhaps no one less fitted to be an adviser on questions of policy than the man who is consulted on questions of law. His training predisposes him to insist upon the strictly technical interpretation of all questions. Take that involved in the transportation of freight over the rails of the Tramway company. For several years efforts have been made by the Board of Trade to secure such a service in connection with the railway companies. It would be a great advantage to many people; it would be a disadvantage to nobody. Surely the fact that the tramcar company may not have the strict legal right to haul freight over its lines ought not to deprive the business community of the advantage of such transportation. We admit at once that it was the duty of the city's legal advisers to inform the Board of Aldermen that could exist in their minds as to the legal rights of the company; we may even admit that, if the city's legal advisers believe the decision of Mr. Justice Martin, which was contrary to their opinion, can be successfully appealed, it was their duty to say so. But what we do not admit is that the Aldermen are bound to throw obstacles in the way of transportation within the city, simply because certain legal gentlemen think there is a fighting chance to win out in a lawsuit.

A gentleman said to the Colonist yesterday: "What's the use of your writing up the development of Victoria and vicinity? The first man that tries to do anything will be stopped by an injunction." We do not know that things are quite as bad as this remark would indicate; but it does seem an unfortunate thing that, at the very time that we are all desirous of having local transportation facilities extended, obstacles should be thrown in the way. It is not as if the Tramway company were seeking to deprive anyone else of a privilege. If that company cannot haul freight through the streets on rails no other company can, and in that case freight cannot be transported through the city on rails. But if some other company could, what difference would it make? Of course if we are bound to stop the transportation of freight through the streets by modern methods, that is another matter. In that case it will be necessary to build up a business section somewhere outside of the city limits. The Board of Aldermen cannot wholly stop the growth of the city, but they can drive business into the suburbs and thus deprecate the value of inside property.

NAVAL DEFENCE

Some time ago the Standard of Empire offered a prize of \$400 for the best essay upon the question "Shall Canada Have a Navy of Her Own?" The prize was awarded last week. The position taken by the writer of the successful contribution is that Canada should have her own navy, acting in cooperation with the British navy, special stress being laid upon the claim that each overseas dominion should maintain its own force and deal with its own naval problems as they exist or may arise. The successful competitor does not think we should be content with a naval establishment, that would be a mere toy, but on the other hand we should not think of providing a fleet of Dreadnoughts. A naval volunteer force and a naval college are proposed, and the subsidizing of merchant ships capable of being utilized in war is favored. The comment of the Standard of Empire is that the essay is "remarkable and suggests both the philosophic temperament and style of Captain Mahan," and it adds that "the essay should prove of great service to the Canadian and British authorities in effecting the proposals unanimously approved by the Dominion Parliament on Monday last."

The author of this notable production is Mrs. W. Hens Oliphant of Toronto. The second best essay was by Mr. G. Frederick Hamilton, of Ottawa. It is a very remarkable thing that a lady should carry off the honors in that competition. It will be not-

ed that her work is commended for its philosophic style. The occasion is emphatically a practical one, involving not only what ought to be done today, but the determination of a policy for the future.

At the time of the debate in the House of Commons The Colonist expressed the opinion that the tone of it and the resolutions adopted were the result of an understanding between the Ministry and the Conservative leaders based upon communications with the British government. So far as we have observed the only other paper which took that view was the Montreal Witness, but the tone of subsequent discussion in our Eastern exchanges, both Liberal and Conservative, give weight to the suggestion. Shortly after the alarmist speech of Sir Edward Grey the Toronto Globe published an editorial which compared with the usual references of that paper to Imperial subjects, was almost hysterical. None of the Conservative papers approached the Globe in the vehemence of its demand for immediate action. Since the vote of the House of Commons, the Globe in common with almost all our Eastern contemporaries, irrespective of politics, has taken the position, substantially, that Canada should not act with precipitation, but should await the result of a conference between representatives of the Canadian Ministry and the Lords of the Admiralty. This remarkable change, taken in connection with the moderate tone of the Eastern Conservative press, seems to make it certain that the Canadian and British governments are acting in full sympathy and that there is no disposition on the part either of the Conservative or Liberal leaders to force the situation in any way. The subject is one that must be approached calmly. There is absolutely no doubt whatever as to the attitude of the Canadian people. They are ready to do their full duty. They only need to be told by those best qualified to judge in what direction that duty lies.

TRANSMUTATION

Sir William Ramsay, one of the greatest chemists of the day, thinks that in one of his experiments a small amount of copper was transmuted into lithium, which is an element of the same class as sodium, potassium, magnesium and the like. He is not absolutely sure about it, but he has eliminated all chances of error sufficiently to be able to say that he believes the change has taken place. This from a scientist of reputation is calculated to attract attention and it has done so very widely. The theory that metals can be transmuted is old as history, and as every one knows the great search of the alchemists was for the process that would change base metals into gold. The value of the discovery, if it could be made, would not be obvious, for if gold could be made by a chemical process from copper or iron, it would cease to have any special value. Whether the art of transmutation was ever possessed by the ancients is a matter concerning which there is a degree of doubt equivalent almost to a negation of the possibility. During the reign of the early Roman emperors numerous works bearing the names of ancient philosophers appeared and in them directions for transmutation were given. In most cases the alleged authorship was spurious, and the edict of prohibition, which commanded their destruction, was probably not due to any fear that gold would become too common to be of value if the directions for its manufacture given in the books ever became public property, but only because he wished to put an end to the absurd experimentation which was rife at that time. Of course, if Sir William Ramsay is right in his surmises as to the result of his experiment, it is possible that in olden times the Egyptians understood transmutation, and it was ever known we may feel confident that it will be rediscovered. At the same time it will be exceedingly premature to get in any panic over the prospective diminution of the purchasing power of a \$20 gold piece.

VICTORIA.

The mineral resources of any imperfectly prospected area are of necessity problematical, and the business suburbs of Victoria have only been very scantily prospected. Some things are known. Gold has been taken in commercial quantities from Leech river and has been found in gravels elsewhere in the region lying along the shore of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Whether the auriferous gravels are sufficiently extensive or sufficiently rich to warrant any great expectations for future development remains to be proved. As a source of general prosperity hydraulic mining for gold is not very important, the amount of labor

employed in it not being very great. If the known gravels prove rich they will be a factor in the progress of the district, but only in a subordinate way. The existence of auriferous gravel is generally looked upon as prima facie evidence of the existence of auriferous lodes not very far away, and we know as a matter of fact that there is free-milling gold quartz on China Creek, which lies between Cowichan Lake and Alberni Canal. But so little is certain about the mineralization of the rocks, which extend across the Island from Saanich Arm south of the above named lake to Barkley Sound, that nothing can be predicted upon the probable existence there of metalliferous deposits. There are known to be several promising deposits of excellent copper ore, some of them far from Victoria, but in no case has development proceeded far enough to warrant any conclusion being drawn respecting them. When we come to iron we are on different ground. There are very extensive deposits of high grade magnetic iron within the area now under consideration. Those best known are at Port Renfrew, near the Strait and at Sarita on Barkley Sound. A very large tonnage of ore is necessary before the establishment of iron smelting plants can be entertained. For years doubt was expressed as to the sufficiency of the deposits now being considered, but our understanding of the matter is that all doubt has been removed, and that ample ore exists. The fact that the ore is all magnetic has also been looked upon as an obstacle to its utilization, but it is far from being so. Mr. Linderman, who was sent out by the Dominion Department of Mines to examine the iron ore of the Island, informed the Colonist that there were no serious difficulties in the way of handling these ores profitably, as they are now handled in Norway. The adoption of electrical smelting is of great interest in this connection. Electrical furnaces have been established in Norway for commercial purposes after a long series of experiments, and if they prove the success commercially that they did experimentally, we may look with confidence to the early utilization of the iron ore referred to. The question of power necessarily arises in this connection. Water power is, of course, the cheapest, providing the interest on the cost of installation is not too great. Our information is that the Nitinat can be utilized for the development of a vast power, and if this is the case, the Sarita and Port Renfrew ores could be concentrated at a common point and an extensive plant could be established.

Of the coal deposits within the business suburbs of Victoria nothing is known with certainty except that coal exists in apparently good quantities. It is found on the Saanich Peninsula and also to the west of Victoria. Prospecting has not sufficiently advanced to warrant the expression of any opinion as to the probable value of the deposits. Of limestone there is an abundance, and as is well known it is suitable not only for the manufacture of ordinary lime, but also for Portland cement. Of brick clay there are excellent deposits.

Speaking generally of the mineral wealth of Victoria's business suburbs, we cannot go any further than to say that the indications are favorable as regards copper and to a less degree as to gold, but in regard to iron, its value may be taken as demonstrated. We do not look for any rapid progress in a mining way in this region, although experience has demonstrated that the unexpected has a fashion of happening in this particular industry. We assign it for the present a subordinate place among the factors upon which the growth and prosperity of the city and its vicinity depend, with the reservation that it may be necessary at any time to recast this view. At present it is not except in regard to iron, an available factor in the development of the district. From the information at present at our command it would not be wise to include gold, silver, copper or coal among the elements of prosperity with the business suburbs upon which the people of Victoria can reckon with confidence.

In addition to the iron ores mentioned, there are deposits at other points along the West Coast, notably at Sechart, Kemano Lake and Nootka Sound. All these ores can be conveniently assembled at a common point within the business suburbs of Victoria, although to do so to the best advantage a railway from this city to Barkley Sound is needed so as to facilitate the movement of the ore from the Renfrew District. The West Coast ores can be loaded upon cars at the mines, and be transported either on barges or self-propelling ferries to the common point. In view of the extent and character of these deposits we see no reason why the people of Victoria may not look forward with confidence to the building up of a great iron and steel industry, not in the city or very close to it, but at some point between here and Barkley Sound. Herein we have a potential element of prosperity of very great importance, and it enables us to say that, in addition to what Victoria's business suburbs have to offer in the way of the products of the forest and the field, they also have available products of the mines of such a character and in such quantity that they ought to afford a stimulus to our efforts at local development.



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\$6.20



TEUTOBORG

The plans of Augustus, enemies within the Roman Empire, extension of his sway over this purpose two expeditions commanded by Tiberius, who the imperial office, directed who lived in what is now a other led by Varus, which is now Western Germany, was successful. It is of the mention will be made here.

Dion Cassius, who wrote the Roman history, held connectedly, but as they were here and there, and at these diars made winter quarters, barbarians soon adopted the gaster in the market places with them; yet their own ingrained habits, the influence were not wholly forgotten. of the people who were there, race, as well as of the Roman, modern Germans were descended not satisfied with the pping in Germany, nor was he Roman dominion by the peace. He determined to redit of serfdom, and to any taxation, which he might first the Germans exhibited mission. They even encouraged from the banks of the Rhine, was unquestioned, and stion in Gaul were within e man leaders were actively p was Hermann, known by the name of Arminius. He was born in entered the service of Rome, fus in his successful expedi Well versed in their arts of of the Latin tongue, he was drawn, he found little difficult to undertake his march ac in order that he might ext enough to reach the region, established the Roman domi remained in company with appears to have been on to friendship, which after event on his part the better to ena plot for the liberation of h Roman commander had been from his base of operations to sible, some of the German Central Prussia took up arm intention to drive the Roman This was done with a great h emence, the intention being ther into the interior. The Varus hurried on, and so peaceful intentions of the people, transgressing in company with carts, carrying the wives, ch the soldiers and an enormous necessitated the making of roa character than would have soldiers, and Cassius says, enemy attacked them, were trees, and road and bridge m things of the sort they had to worse, heavy rains and high cut through the forests we h in some places became i the blow fell. The German against Varus, "and having sticking fast in the path f varied havoc on the Roman.

The account given by Dion the Teutoborg Forest shows absolutely at the mercy of suffered, he said, that he w the Germans, familiar with w with baggage, fell upon the troops, accustomed to fight in clear spaces. The slaughter ordered the destruction of as could possibly be spared, from the forest, but this only ing crowded together so th with advantage. On the th furious rain and all night could neither advance nor storm. Falling trees killed m soaked through their leathe vetted the strings of their absolutely helpless. The Ger like wasps, their numbers b while those of the Romans Varus and his principal officer for a deed of dreadful necessi Dion Cassius adds, "When one defended himself any lon was sufficient for it; all im casting away their arms, su kill them; for on one could wished. So now every m safely slain, and all might tured had not the barbarian dering the spoil; whereby t escape.

After this terrible defeat, from their German fortifica The horrors of the retreat w we may form some idea of tioned that one force, seeki German bodies by a night, because the women and ch swept loudly on account of fierce rains. Creasy, writing mnius, says: "Never was a never was the liberation of a instantaneous and complete. the Roman garrisons were c weeks after Varus had falli freed from the foot of an says: "Then Augustus, when of Varus, rent his garment, tion for the troops he had respecting the Germans and son of Italy was looked a "there remained no Roman y that were worth speaking of chosen by lot to serve in th tated were put to death. S on condition that they wou fearful portents on earth and mits of the Alps are said to b of fire blazed up from them. Rome was shattered by li glowed as if on fire. Many statue of victory on the Ger stood facing Germany, turne are the stories told by the R who said also that for mo dreadful fate of the Roman Augustus would spring to h his apartments, beat his hea cry: "Varus, give me back The battle of the Teutobo point in the history of mank less to speculate upon what if Varus, from the West, had conquests with those of Tibet it seems certain that in such of Rome would have long be