# The Colonist.

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## STREET IMPROVEMENT.

The COLONIST has placed before its readers abundant evidence that there is no difference of opinion as to the necessity for the improvement of the business streets at the earliest possible day. It does not appear as if the Mayor's plan would meet very general approval, the principal objection to it being that it is only of a temporary nature and would entail considerable expense for maintenance, while never being wholly satisfactory. The objection to a brick pavement on the ground of noise is a very serious one. If demonstration is needed on this point it can be had without going any further than Seattle. Three of the principal business streets in that city are paved with brick, and although they are considerably wider than our business streets the noise of traffic is a very great annoyance. There is a great deal of traffic on Government street, and as it is by no means a wide street, if it were paved with brick, the noise would be almost intolerable. It would lower the rental value of every business house on the street more than it would be enhanced by the improvement. For years to come Government street will be an important retail centre, and for this reason the paving material should be of as noiseless a character as possible. Whatever may be done with the others Government street ought to be paved with wooden blocks.

Whether or not there should be a frontage tax is a question upon which there is a difference of opinion. It is said that if an attempt were made to get legislation to authorize this tax, the great unpopularity of such a measure would be at once apparent. As yet we are without evidence of this unpopularity. We are not very clear as to with whom the tax would be unpopular. Take the case of the property owners who would have to pay it, say those on Government street for example. Suppose the law were such that they could have this street paved at their sole expense on the condition that having done so their property on this street would be relieved of any further contribution to the expense of putting down permanent pavements or making other street improvements except repairs, would it not pay them in the long run? Take property on this or any other street, would it not enhance its value to have it known that for the next fifteen or twenty years it would be relieved in whole or part of any contribution towards the expense of paving other streets? We are inclined to the opinion that if the law permitted the levying of the whole cost of permanent improvements upon the abutting property, such property after the permanent improvements were made to be exempt from contribution to the cost of permanent improvements elsewhere, we would soon see a great betterment in our streets. A healthy rivalry would spring up between localities with excellent results. But so that the improvements are made and made at once, we are not very greatly concerned as to how the cost is distributed. The only object in bringing this phase of the question up is to have it settled before the work of permanent improvement is begun.

The thing now most to be thought of is how to crystallize the talk of the last few months into action. As was said in the first article in the COLONIST during the present discussion, the matter under our law rests with the property owners of the city at large. They must take the initiative. The city council is powerless to act without a petition. Some one must move in the matter of getting up a petition. But as some things have to be settled in advance, might it not be well for the Mayor to call a public meeting to discuss the whole subject? If in the opinion of such a meeting it is desirable to adopt the system of a frontage tax the whole situation would be materially changed. If it is the opinion of the majority that the present system meets the requirements of the case, then the meeting could express its opinion as to what ought to be done, that is, what streets should be paved and how they should be paved. A committee could also be appointed to circulate the necessary petition.

## THE ROYAL ASSENT.

We do not think there is anything in the point suggested by Mr. Speaker yesterday as to the invalidity of the legislation assented to by the Lieutenant-Governor on Thursday last. Mr. Helmcken raised a question as to the right of the Lieutenant-Governor to call the house to order in the absence of Mr. Speaker, and it was in this connection that the point above referred to was suggested.

There can hardly be a shadow of doubt as to how Mr. Helmcken's question must be answered. The Lieutenant-Governor has no right whatever to call the house to order either in the presence or absence of Mr. Speaker. He does not appear to have done so on Thursday last, but simply to have entered the house during a recess and signified his assent to certain bills. Has he the right to do this, and, if not, what is the effect of his having done so?

First, as to the question of right. The prerogative of the crown to assent to bills is never exercised while the House of Commons is in session. The Sovereign comes down or sends a commissioner down to the House of Lords, the Commons is summoned, and members are informed that the royal assent has been given. The constitution of the British Empire does not contemplate the presence of the Sovereign upon the floor of the House of Commons at any time. In most of the Canadian provinces the legislature consists only of one branch. Hence it is not easy to apply to their parliamentary practice the rule followed in the British parliament; but this of itself shows that the time and manner of giving the royal assent to bills must be determined by those bodies. Since the British constitution does not require the assent to be given to bills when the House of Commons is is session, and the practice is to the contrary, it follows that there is no constitutional objection to the Lieutenant-Governor's assenting to bills at any time. For this we conclude that the Lieutenant-Governor was within his constitutional right in signifying his assent to the bills in question at the time and in the manner followed on Thursday.

Having arrived at this conclusion, it is unimportant to consider what would be the effect of the royal assent given under circumstances which might be deemed an infringement upon the privileges of the house; but as sometimes questions are raised of this nature, it is well to say that the records of parliament are conclusive evidence of everything contained therein, and inasmuch as the Journal of Thursday last shows the assent of the Lieutenant-Governor to have been given to the acts referred to, the whole world is estopped from saying that such assent has not been regularly given. The correctness of the entry on the Journal of Thursday can never be impeached anywhere or at any time. Hence it follows that Mr. Speaker was wholly wrong in suggesting that doubts might exist as to the legality of acts done under the authority of the bills which on that day became law.

It may be well to add by way of explanation that the course taken by the Lieutenant-Governor was followed through inadvertence and without any intention of violating precedents or of showing any discourtesy to the House or Mr. Speaker.

## THE POPE AND CANADA.

The announcement that the Pope has dispatched or is about to dispatch his private secretary as his representative to inquire into the condition of things in the Province of Quebec, arising out of the school question, will be received with much difference of opinion. Upon the general proposition that papal interference in the affairs of this Dominion cannot be tolerated, we think there will be absolute unanimity. Political parties may employ sectarian differences for their own purposes, but when it comes to a question whether the conduct of the government of this country shall depend even remotely upon the will of the Pope, there will be no longer any Conservatives or Liberals on that issue, but all will be Canadians. It is impossible that a representative of the Pope can have any political status or recognition in this country.

But when this is said the whole has not been said. In fact to say this and no more is simply to beg the very important question involved. It must be manifest to every student of Canadian history that the issue which is raised by the attitude of the Quebec clergy is no mere affair of yesterday, so to speak, and has not its origin in the legislation of Manitoba on the school question. We must look for its beginning more than a hundred years ago, when Lord North purchased the loyalty of the French in the then lately conquered province of Quebec by restoring to the clergy the rights and privileges which they had enjoyed under the old French regime. There is perhaps no abler or better organized body of men anywhere than the Quebec clergy of to-day, but their conceptions of civil liberty belong more to mediæval than to modern times. They have assumed and for more than a hundred years have exercised the right to control the exercise of civil rights by the people under their spiritual guidance. This is a position which the Roman Catholic priesthood does not take elsewhere. It would not be tolerated by English-speaking Roman Catholic Canadians. It is unheard of in the United States. It has not for many years been attempted in France. It is even not assumed in Italy itself. It is entirely opposed to the spirit of all the recent deliverances of the Supreme Pontiff. Only a few years have passed since Pope Leo extended his benediction to the Republic of France and he has on more than one occasion taken the opportunity to express his sympathy with the development of the democracy in America. His policy seems to be to show that the church over which he presides is capable of adapting itself to the progress of civilization. That he entertains a strong antipathy to secret orders, which may seem to conflict with his professed championship of human liberty may be conceded, but the impartial reviewer of his career since he ascended the chair of St. Peter must admit that he has done more to bring the papacy in touch with progressive civilization than all of his predecessors during the present century combined. We shall not admit that the reactionary and mediæval ideas which animate the majority of the Quebec clergy are in keeping with the principles which influence the Pope until direct evidence to that effect is forthcoming.

The issue that has been raised is not whether justice has been done the Roman Catholics of Manitoba, but whether the Roman Catholic clergy can be permitted to interpose their clerical office to compel those who are under their spiritual care to take a certain line of action in the exercise of their civil rights. No one for a single instant denies that the Roman Catholics of Canada of whatever race have the fullest right to take what view they please of the Manitoba school question, and to agitate for any solution of it that commends itself to them. No one denies that the Roman Catholic clergy have the right to exercise the influence which their office and their personal standing give them to mold the opinions of those who look to them for guidance. But this right is conceded to them, not because they are priests of the Church of Rome, but because they are citizens of a free country. It cannot be admitted that in exercising it they stand on a different plane from that occupied by laymen. They are not Richelieus who may draw around candidates and policies "the holy circle of the church," and launch anathemas at all who assail them.

The real issue, which must be settled if the union of the Canadian provinces is to be permanent, is not what the rights of the Roman Catholics are in provinces where they form a minority of the population, but: Shall these rights be determined by the majority vote of the people acting free and untrammelled as citizens, or shall two-thirds of them so act, and the other third be compelled to take their ballot in their hand with the fear of ecclesiastical displeasure and possibly excommunication confronting them? If the object of the appointment of an ablegate to Canada is to inform the papacy of the actual relation which the Quebec clergy have taken in regard to the exercise of civil rights by our Roman Catholic French speaking fellow citizens, his visit can hardly fail to produce results of great importance, and we fail to see wherein it affords any ground of protest. It would simply relate to a matter of internal policy of the Roman Catholic church, and we are very hopeful that it would result in an admonition from Rome that will prevent any further interference by the Clergy of Quebec with the exercise of civil rights by the people of that province.

The announcement that the Ministry may withhold the writ for Champlain, Quebec, until after parliament meets, and that an act will then be introduced making it a crime for a priest to interfere with the exercise of civil rights, is somewhat of a surprise, and it is very greatly to be hoped that such an extreme step will not be necessary. If it is, the remarkable spectacle will be presented of a Roman Catholic premier taking the lead in legislation to limit the influence of the Roman Catholic priesthood. We do not believe that such a line of action will be called for, but that the Pope will interpose his authority and hold the clergy in check.

SOME one who says "I am only a child" takes exception to the view advanced in Sunday's COLONIST to the effect that the Universe of Stars is limited. It is pleasant to find one who is only a child taking an interest in such matters, but a word of warning may be useful. Such a paragraph as that which is enclosed in the letter and is as follows: "Think of it, dear children, in the Milky Way alone there are eighteen millions of suns, with their systems of inhabited worlds, and by looking through instruments we may see eighteen billions of suns with their systems of worlds, all revolving around these suns, their common centres; and the end is not yet, for when we have scaled the highest pinnacle of the furtherest sun and leveled our instruments, we may behold even [illegible] number studding the fathomless depths of the stellar space." [illegible] whom it may have [illegible] No matter by very misleading. [illegible] been written it is eighteen billi[illegible]s of suns with their revolving w[illegible]lds. No telescope discloses [illegible]

WHEN the matter of street improvements is under consideration Bastion street should not be forgotten. This is the avenue by which ninety per cent. of all strangers enter Victoria. It ought therefore to be made thoroughly presentable. Minor improvements that can be made at once are the removal of two or three very unsightly poles, the clearing away of the grassy place near the corner of Wharf street, and the levelling of the whole street. A new sidewalk ought to be laid from Langley to Wharf street. It would be a good thing if all the poles could be removed from the street, and from its intersections with other streets, but we do not want to ask too much at once.

THE indications on the Sound are that the rush to the Yukon will be unprecedented. A meeting was held last night in Seattle to discuss transportation facilities. About 200 men were present, all of whom claimed to be bound for the North. The general idea seemed to be that additional steamship accommodation is needed.

THE death of Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher in her 85th year removes an interesting figure from the public gaze. She was a woman of more than ordinary ability, and several popular books and many contributions to periodical literature emanated from her pen. Her maiden name was Eunice White Bullard, and she was a native of Massachusetts.

A BILL has been introduced into the New York legislature to provide for the appointment of press censors, to whom everything printed in newspapers shall be submitted before publication. The next thing we shall hear of is a bill to declare it a felony without benefit of clergy to speak disrespectfully of the 400.

THE Post-Intelligencer is much alarmed lest it shall prove impossible to secure legislation releasing the northern part of the Cascade range in Washington from the operation of the forestry reserve proclamation. Unless this can be done, mining in the neighboring state will get a terrible black eye.

THE Calgary Herald thinks the mining camps will buy a great deal of condensed milk. Where better can milk be produced than here on the Coast?

## THE CANADIAN PRESS,

### THE COMPANIES ACT.

Under this bill it will require a Philadelphia lawyer to incorporate a company and directors will live subject to heavy penalties if they do not comply with a lot of self-contradictory directions. The legislature is about to introduce the unfortunate mine director into a labyrinth, with instructions to get out of it or go to jail.—Rossland Miner.

### A PRIZE CONUNDRUM.

Are the mass of its people to earn, by the hewing of wood and the drawing of water for the coal and timber barons the taxes upon which the country's administration is supported, while the countless wealth of its natural resources is drained away to pay the dividends of foreign syndicates?—The Columbian.

### A MARKET FOR MILK.

Whether present conditions admit of the existence of a condensed milk factory in the west or not, there is no question that the mining districts will require a large supply of condensed milk, as the nature of the country in the mining regions makes the keeping of cattle there an impossibility. The question of a condensed milk factory in Alberta has already been thought of and is one worthy of continued consideration.—Calgary Herald.

### THE CROW'S NEST PASS.

There is no doubt the people of Canada will have sooner or later to defray the cost of this line by whoever it may be built, and even if it is granted that a private company could make the first cost smaller than could be done by the government, it would eventually be found that its construction had cost the public under the sinking fund plus profit system, the difference many times over.—Lethbridge News.

### ROME AND QUEBEC.

The appointment of a commission of cardinals to investigate these matters, and the sending of a papal ablegate to Canada, is looked upon as a serious rebuff to the Canadian hierarchy.—Regina Leader.


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YOU will naturally wonder how a physician can visit every household throughout the country. He does it in this way; this little article goes into every home and through it Doctor Ratcliffe speaks to every family. He speaks to you. He asks you, in sacred confidence, the following questions, which you will do well to answer in person or by letter:

MEN
Are you weak?
Is your sleep refreshing?
Do you have emissions?
Do you have pimples?
Do you shun society?
Are you lacking self-confidence?
Do you have dizziness?
Are your thoughts gloomy?
Is your memory poor?
Have you weak back?
Do your kidneys pain?
Have you exhausted your vitality?
Are your nerves unstrung?
Do you contemplate marriage
Are you fit for matrimony?

WOMEN
Have you periodical headaches?
Do you have bearing-down pains?
Do you feel tired or languid?
Is your womb disarranged?
Is your complexion sallow?
Are you subject to dizzy spells?
Are you constipated?
Are you losing your appetite?
Have you ringing in the ears?
Have you leucorrhoeal discharges?
Have you hysteria?
Is your sleep sound?
Do you have cold feet?

As these symptoms become more prominent the power of manhood and the beauty of womanhood disappear. Try and get back what you have lost. Explain your condition to Doctor Ratcliffe, who is recognized everywhere as the greatest living specialist on all sexual diseases of both men and women.

DR. RATCLIFFE Is also an expert on Gonorrhoea, Stricture, Syphilis, Varicocele, Hydrocele, Piles, Rupture, Rheumatism, Catarrh, Blood and Skin Diseases and Diseases of the Eye, Ear, Brain, Nose, Throat, Heart, Lungs, Liver, Stomach, Kidneys, Bladder and Urinary Organs.

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## RATHER TOO BRITISH.

The Oregonian says:

Chas. H. Lugrin, formerly editor of the Seattle Telegraph, and then of the Press-Times, is now in charge of the Victoria COLONIST. Mr. Lugrin's editorial course on the British-American differences and especially his action in putting into British hands some documents he possessed relative to the Schomburgk line, indicates that the change he has made is one eminently fit.

## BY WAY OF VARIETY.

"At least there is one thing that can be said in favor of the Turks—they are a highly religious people."

"Oh, anyone can see that from the way they fight."—Indianapolis Journal.

"I hear you have a big pile of money up on the Corbett-Fitzsimmon fight."

"Yes: I have a bet of $5,000 that Corbett will win, one of $5,000 that Fitzsimmons will win, another of $5,000 that one or the other will whip, and still another of $5,000 that it will be a draw. I'm taking no chances on this fight, let me tell you."—Chicago Tribune.

She—You won't object to having dear mamma live with us after we are married, will you?

He (a young doctor)—Not at all. In fact she will be most welcome.

She—It's so good of you to say so.

He—Not at all. You see, she is always ailing and I really need somebody to experiment on.—Comic Cuts.

Mrs. Blonde (wildly)—Where did this black hair come from?

Mr. Blonde—I was riding behind a black horse and he switched his tail.

Mrs. Blonde—This is fine hair.

Mr. Blonde—Yes, it was a fine horse.—Comic Home Journal.

Doctor (who has been called in to see a colored patient)—You have a very bad case of bronchitis, Mr. Johnson, and must keep out of the night air, live on chicken broth for a few days and——

Mr. Johnson—Hole on dar, doctor; how's I gwine to get chicken broth if I can't go out nights?—New York Tribune.

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