

Weekly Colonist

FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 1889. MISCHIEF-MAKERS AND BLAND-REERS.

In Saturday's Times appeared a leading article which will illustrate the unscrupulousness of that journal and the length it is prepared to go in order to injure the Provincial Secretary who would seem to be its bete noir. It states that the Provincial Secretary has, in his public speeches, "made a general charge against the teachers of being indolent and guilty of insubordination and conspiracy." Now, nothing could well be more directly opposed to the truth. So far from making a general charge of the kind against the teachers of the Province, the Provincial Secretary spoke of them as a body in the highest terms of praise. He said that, with very few exceptions, they were industrious, conscientious, painstaking and were cheerfully carrying out the instructions of the Department. Descending to particulars, the minister intimated that of the whole staff in Vancouver, there were only two "kickers," while of the twenty-one teachers in this city he ventured to say that there were twenty loyally and cheerfully doing their duty. Subsequent events would seem to show that the minister was not swerving, not in censure, but in praise of the teachers—precisely the opposite of what our unscrupulous contemporary, in its rancorous hate of the Provincial Secretary, endeavors to make out.

Scarcely less disingenuous is the attempt to make it appear that the "daily marking" is a rule conceived and arbitrarily introduced by the Provincial Secretary, and, therefore, that the flood-gates of the wrath of its opponents (or more properly detractors) are justly opened on him. Now, the "daily marking" rule is one of many formulated by the Superintendent of Education for the internal working of the schools, and it is not to be for a moment supposed that the minister had anything to do with its adoption beyond having it inserted in the bill on the recommendation of the Superintendent, whose duty it is to attend to such details. Indeed the Minister so stated in the House. The act of making that rule law was the act of the Legislature, and it may not be amiss, therefore, to remind recalcitrant teachers that they are kicking not only against the Superintendent and the Minister, but against the Legislature. In all friendships, we would advise them to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the last clause of the fifth verse of the ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

As regards the merits of the little rule which has raised such a tempest in the Provincial press (with one or two unimportant exceptions) is that it is one of those matters of detail in the internal working of the schools which may very properly be left in the hands of the Superintendent—that it is really a matter concerning which neither the Minister nor the Legislature can be presumed to be very good judges. The principal objection urged against the rule is that it occupies too much of the teacher's time. Now it is admitted on all hands that this objection has little or no weight, as applied to common rural schools. But if we take our city schools, what do we find? The Superintendent in our authority for the statement that it need not of copy more than a few minutes in any of average ability can comply with the rule without its trenching upon his teaching time at all. The fact is, as the Minister said in his blunt way, the agitation against "daily marking" has been worked up by a "crank" who was ignominiously but deservedly kicked out of our schools, and who, unfortunately for the credit of the profession, found a few congenial spirits willing to assist him in seeking to revenge himself upon the Department whose only crime against him was an effort to befriend him.

THAT FIZZLE.

The organ of the Opposition declares that we are casualistic and sophistical and goodness knows what else besides, because we hold that the words "take into consideration the advisability" imply a discretion to accept or reject on the part of those to whom it is addressed. If we, for instance, recommended the editor of the Times to take into consideration the advisability of giving more reasons and fewer compliments in his articles would not our language imply that we left it to his discretion whether he followed our advice or not? No one who understands it is supposed to be a command or an instruction. It was a proposition submitted to the judgment of our contemporary in a very modest and deferential way, and as likely as not, offered with the conviction that it would be utterly disregarded. To present to a person's consideration the advisability of assenting to an opinion or acting according to a recommendation and then declaring that he must not consider whether it is advisable or not, is surely trifling with both the man and the English language. We will not do our contemporary the injustice to suppose that it does not see the absurdity of the position it assumes.

We are found fault with because we did not give the "opinions" of the members of the different committees—that we only gave their recommendation. The recommendations were all that were necessary to give. The recommendation is what the whole report led up to. It was what the committee asked the Government to do. When we offer a man an apple, he does not complain because he is not also presented with the limb on which it grew.

Then it is intimated that the words in which the recommendations were couched were a respectful way of presenting them to the Government, and that if they were more distinct and definite they would

have been ruled out of order. For our amusement we read a number of the recommendations of special committees reports as they appear on the Journals of different years and we find that the form of the recommendations in question is quite unusual. "Your committee suggest," "Your committee are of opinion," "Your committee recommend," "Your committee have the honor to report that it is advisable," are some of the ways in which the special committees phrase their conclusions as they arrive. Some of the committees use more definite and more forcible language than even the above. One committee of which Mr. Pooley was the chairman, "recommended the granting of a Petition of Right." Another committee "consider that it is not desirable to incur the expense." A third committee "recommended strict compliance," etc., and another "strongly urge the necessity." Select committees generally are, we find, not nearly so diffident and so deferential as our contemporary would have its readers believe. When they come to a definite conclusion and feel certain that they are right they do not leave the reader in doubt as to what they want done, and they do not ask those whom they address to "consider the advisability" of attending to their suggestions or recommendations. They suggest and recommend without qualification or circumspection of any kind. The fact is the Opposition made the most of their vote of censure and it is useless for their organs to attempt to make it appear other than a stupid blunder.

SURROUNDED BY DANGER.
The British Government has good cause to increase and improve its navy. The nation has an immense mercantile marine to be protected. On the safety of its merchant shipping the existence of the British people depends. The greater part of the bread and other food that people eat, and the material that they work upon comes to Great Britain from across the sea. If a foreign power or a combination of foreign powers should obtain command of the sea its inhabitants would literally starve to death. "Britain's best bulwarks are her wooden walls" was said and sung long ago. With a slight alteration this holds true still, except that for "wooden" we must read iron and steel. That Great Britain's main dependence is her navy is as true to-day as it was a hundred years ago. The "silver streak" of sea properly guarded by her battle ships is her best protection from invasion. No army that it is possible for her to raise can do one tenth part as much for her safety as the fleet which she can build and man with comparative ease. There is talk about fortifying London, but men of experience say that London's fortifications must be on the British seas, that she must be in such a position that it will be impossible for a foreign army to land on her shores.

England's naval supremacy is the great condition of her national existence. This is seen and acknowledged by the great fighting powers of the world, and they have of late years been spending large sums of money to contest with her that supremacy. France has been adding to her fleet a large number of vessels well calculated to do immense damage to the commerce of any nation with which she may be at war. She has added a fleet of fast-sailing cruisers, and is building many more. Admiral Krau, who is at the head of the naval department, has now in course of construction eleven armored vessels, five of which will be completed this year, and the rest in 1890 and 1891. He is also building two steel-decked cruisers in ten twenty knots an hour, that will be finished next year and the year after. He has also on the stocks eighteen cruisers of not less than 1,000 tons displacement. Expenditure has been authorized for strengthening the harbors of Cherbourg and Brest. What do these preparations mean? These vessels alone would make a formidable fleet, to say nothing of those that are already built and in commission.

Italy possesses a number of the heaviest battle ships in the world, and she is making large additions to her fleet. It is suspected that her immense iron structures are out of date, but they have not been put to the test. Her "programme for 1889 to 1891 contemplates a gradual increase of every class of ships from armored battleships through protected cruisers, of which class this nation owns some splendid specimens, down to speedy torpedo craft and armed sea-going tugs. It will be seen from this that Italy has of late years risen to be a first-class naval power.

Russia, too, is preparing to contest with Great Britain the supremacy of the seas. She has a fine fleet of ships of modern construction and armament, and is building many more. Her Government proposes to build nineteen first-class battle ships, four second-class and ten first-class cruisers. This fleet is not merely on paper, the ships are being built, and are turned out at the rate of three or four a year. Two battle ships are on the stocks, and four more cruisers have been ordered. Russia seems determined when war breaks out again to have a fleet that will not have to run under the guns of her forts for protection.

Germany is not neglecting her fleet. The activity of Russia has apparently roused her to exertion, and she is taking measures strongly to reinforce her navy. She is building battle ships for coast and harbor defense as well as for foreign service and is adding protected cruisers to her fleet.

Seeing such activity in the dockyards of all the great European powers, it is no wonder that Great Britain is looking to her means of defense and is determining to expend large sums of money in order to be prepared to protect her flag in every sea and over whatever land it may float. Those who are urging the British Government to make large additions to its navy and to put the coast of the country in a good state of defense are not mere alarmists. They are prudent and far-seeing men, who know that Great Britain cannot afford to be unprepared when the European war, which every one sees is sure to come sooner or later, breaks out.

CABLE NEWS.

Movement to Elect Parnell a Life Member of the National Liberal Club.
A King's Favorite.
LONDON, March 4.—King Charles of Wurtemberg, who still resides here, has made a London, March 4.—Whatever may have been the motive of John Aird, Conservative member of parliament for Paddington, in writing a letter to the Times, suggesting that the Tories appoint a committee to meet a similar body representing the liberals, for the purpose of settling the Irish question on the basis of a certain measure of home rule, the communication has attracted very little serious attention. It is needless to say the letter was wholly unauthorized by any leader of the government party, and as the Tories were Ireland under the control of the government, any form of local government than now, the views expressed by Mr. Aird may be regarded as peculiarly and distinctly his own.

Monument on the Battle Field of Woertz in Memory of Emperor Frederick.
A Home Rule Measure.
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THE OLD AND THE NEW.
President Harrison Assumes the Bells of the United States.
WASHINGTON, March 4.—At 10 o'clock this morning the bells of the Capitol were alive with stir and bustle, and there were probably about 100,000 visitors along the line of route, and as many more on the sidewalks. The bells were rung for the first time since the inauguration of President Harrison. The bells were rung for the first time since the inauguration of President Harrison.

OUR OTTAWA LETTER.
The Week's Doings at the Federal Capital.
The Pizle of the Session—O' Battery Barracks—B. C. University—Creality to Animals—Prohibition.

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Resolution in Favor of Annexing the New England States to the Dominion.

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Rumor that King Milan will Abdicate the Serbian Throne in Favor of His Son.
Bismarck Planning the Formation of a New State After the King of Holland Dies.

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