

The Colonist.

FRIDAY, MAY 1, 1891.

A SMART ALECK.

There are some men and some newspapers that haven't sense enough to be civil. Their ambition is to be thought sharp and clever. In order to raise a laugh or to create the impression that they are keen and shrewd they are ready to perpetrate any impertinences and to take the most unwarrantable liberties with the truth. They are the "smart alecks" of the time. Five men out of six dislike and despise them, and the sixth is afraid of them because he is a fool.

The News-Advertiser is doing the best, or worst, to earn for itself the character of a smart-aleck. Without provocation of any kind, merely to show how clever it is and to gain a reputation for being killing sarcasm, it speaks of its neighbors and contemporaries in the most insolent and offensive way. In its issue of the 25th, it assails the people of Victoria because some of them have seen fit to talk about giving a railway, which makes Victoria its ocean terminus a bonus. Though there is no definite scheme before the public, though the citizens in general treat the projects that are talked about very coolly indeed, and though neither of the newspapers of the city has seriously discussed such proposals as have been made, the News-Advertiser would have its readers believe that the inhabitants of Victoria are railway mad. Let us be accused of exaggeration, we re-produce the opening sentences of the Advertiser's article:

"Some cities, like individuals, are afflicted with monomania. The city of Victoria is one of these places, and at present it is passing through a severe attack of the disease. The peculiar direction which the malady takes in the Capital City, is that of fancying that nature and circumstances have combined to make it a— we had almost said—the railway centre of this Continent. As a mad dog manifests symptoms of hydrophobia whenever it sees water, so the people of Victoria develop their feeling in the most acute stage whenever railway projects in other parts of the province are under consideration."

There may be a few silly persons in Vancouver who regard this as smart writing, but we are quite sure that the great majority of its inhabitants, who are able to read and write, will condemn it as mischievous, as well as untruthful, trash. It is mischievous, in so far as its mocking tone and the unfriendly spirit in which it is written, is calculated to engender ill-feeling between the two cities. Evil-speaking, lying and slandering like the above do not tend to promote good neighborhood, and it is in the interest both of Victoria and Vancouver that their inhabitants should live on the most friendly terms with each other. It is only men of the smart-aleck calibre who think that Vancouver can be benefited in any way by ridiculing and abusing Victoria.

No one but a shallow-pated and ill-natured chatterer will find fault with the citizens of Victoria for trying to make the best of the natural advantages of their city, or for resorting to any practicable scheme to overcome any of its disadvantages. In some respects it is a disadvantage to Victoria to be situated on an island. It derives many advantages from its insular position, and from being the part of the province easiest of access and nearest to the ocean, but there being a stretch of salt water between it and the railway termini of the continent is a drawback. When proposals are made to lessen the disadvantage of this drawback, or to take it away altogether, the citizens of Victoria would be very foolish indeed to reject them without examination. They should listen attentively to all that the projectors have to say in behalf of their several schemes, in order to be able to decide whether they are practicable or not. The Board of Trade has done this and no more, with respect to the proposal made by the North American Company. The City Council, thus, as far as we know, spent very little time in deliberating upon the matter, and as we have already hinted the proposals have been very far indeed from creating an excitement among the citizens generally. They are, no doubt, being quietly considered by thoughtful Victorians, and as there has been no agitation to disturb or unsettle their judgment, the decision at which they will arrive will certainly be a reasonable one.

It is impossible to imagine proposals of such importance being more dispassionately considered than are those that have been lately made respecting direct railway connection between Victoria and the Mainland. The man who ridicules Victorians because such schemes have been proposed or because, being proposed, they have not been unanimously rejected, writes himself down an ass.

CHEAP SUGAR.

It is more than likely that the people of the Dominion will have cheap sugar before very long. The abolition of the duties on raw sugar in the States will make a similar measure necessary in this country. If sugar is very dear in Canada, and very cheap across the line, it would be simply impossible to prevent sugar being extensively smuggled into Canada. Human nature is so constituted that, whenever the duties are so high as to make smuggling worth while, men will smuggle, and the facilities for smuggling along a frontier of three thousand miles long are very great indeed.

It is not likely that the Dominion Government will allow either Canadians or Americans to be exposed to the temptation which a great disparity in the price of sugar on the two sides of the boundary line would create.

By giving the people cheap sugar the Government will be, so to speak, killing two birds with one stone. It will be taking temptation out of the way of both Can-

adians and Americans, as we have already said, and it will be sure to please the people of this Dominion. Canadians are large consumers of sugar, and they do like to get a good article at a low price. They cannot, therefore, fail to appreciate the boon of cheap sugar, and they will be sure to be grateful to the Government that extends it to them.

Taking the duty off raw sugar will be no violation of the principles of the National Policy. Sugar is not to any great extent produced in Canada. It is merely refined there. If the duty is taken off raw sugar and retained, or only slightly lowered, on refined sugar, the refiners will have their protection still. Getting the raw sugar much cheaper they will be able to sell products of their refineries lower than they do now and still make their present profit.

The only question with the Government then is can it afford to do without the duty now levied on raw sugar? We see that the decrease in revenue which the abolition of the duty on raw sugar will cause is calculated to be three millions of dollars. This is a pretty big sum, but as the Government has a surplus and as it is bound to economize, the loss will not embarrass it a great deal. There is, therefore, good reason to believe that the Government will make the change which will be a great advantage to the people without being a very serious inconvenience to itself.

AMERICAN RAILWAYS.

The Duke of Marlborough has not been generally regarded by the newspaper readers of Great Britain or Canada as a man of business. A very great deal has been said and written to create the impression that he is exactly the reverse. It will, therefore, be a surprise to most people to find that he has contributed an article—and a very readable one—to the Fortnightly Review, on American railways. The title of the paper is "Virginia, Mines and American Railways," and it is apparently the first of a series on the same subject.

The Duke writes like a keen business man of a great deal more than average intelligence. He takes a bird's-eye view, as it were, of the whole railway system of the States, and gives a graphic sketch of its history and of the methods of American railway men.

He does not flatter American railway projectors and railway builders. For ways that are dark and for tricks that are not, by any means, vain they have been, according to the noble Duke, very peculiar. The first roads, built to a very great extent with English money, did not bring the investors any return. As many of our readers will be curious to know how a Duke writes about railways, we will give them his description of the operations of the promoters of many of the roads in the United States. Speaking of the Erie system, the Pennsylvania extensions, the Reading, the West Shore, the Wabash, the Union Pacific, Northern Pacific, etc., he says:

"When these large railway systems were laid out and planned, the promoters under state charters, and lands granted adjacent to the line, the schemes were bonded for immense sums, often for greater than the system cost when first opened. The promoters and undertakers floated their gold bonds in the European markets, built the roads as cheaply and as poorly as they could, throwing the sleepers across the prairies and putting down the rails with no ballast but earth and providing only wooden bridges. The English public bought the stock, entreprising financiers advertised the railway system and the advantages of the land grants in every small town of Great Britain and Germany. Emigrants poured in and the land was taken up. The shares of these railways, which were in truth only worth the paper they were printed on, were for a time sold at a premium, and the promoters made large fortunes. The promoters sold the paper they had printed, besides obtaining the profit on the expenditure provided by the gold bonds, and then came the great reversals of equipment, bonds of income bonds, and all the multifarious devices of the speculator for fleecing the investing public on both sides of the Atlantic."

This is not a pleasant picture to look upon, but there is too much reason to believe that it is true to life. Nor is the Duke's description of the system of railway financing at all brighter or more creditable than those who worked it than the methods of floating railway schemes and constructing railways. The devices that are resorted to to get possession of railways shows that to steal a railway in the United States, at any rate, is by no means an impossible feat. Wrecking railways financially, seems, according to the reviewer, to be a profession in the States, and, if what he says is true, Young Ives is not by any means the only Napoleon of Finance, whose field of operation has been the United States. Some of these Napoleons have been brilliantly successful, and have made immense fortunes at the expense of the honest and unsuspecting investor.

The way in which they do their work is described in the article before us, and the writer does not hesitate in his description to call a spade a spade.

If the policy he advises British investors to adopt be followed, the device of the wreckers and speculators will not be a successful one in the future as they have been in the past. He would have British stockholders fight the schemes with their own weapons. He advises them to combine for the purpose of giving the stock they hold its legitimate value in the election of directors and in the management of roads.

The Duke of Marlborough, notwithstanding all that British investors have lost or been cheated out of, is of opinion that American railways are good property, that there is scarcely an American road which, if carefully and honestly managed, would not yield a good dividend to its owners. This is part of what he says on that subject: "Yet, next to real estate in the large

towns of the States, railway property is probably the most valuable of all forms of wealth in America. Any railway decently managed can and should pay a dividend on its shares. It is a matter of certainty that every year will see this form of property gradually rise in value as large and well-considered schemes of consolidation take shape."

Although the financial management of American railways is so open to question, they do their work well and cheaply. A ton of freight is carried a mile for one-third of what it is carried on British railways; the accommodation for passengers is good, and their arrangements as regards baggage, etc., admirable. An Englishman is quoted as saying: "I went to America, this autumn, with my son, and we travelled over more than twelve thousand miles of railway all over the continent, and we never had a hitch or failed to make a connection throughout all the journey."

NOT COERCION.

It is difficult for us to understand what the people of Newfoundland mean by "coercion." It is not the policy of Great Britain, in these days, to coerce her colonies. Where her interests alone are concerned they are allowed all the liberty that reasonable men could ask, and very much more than colonists, within the memory of many now living, dared to expect. They manage their domestic affairs exactly as they like. They frame their own laws and impose such other taxes as they consider expedient. They make their own laws without consulting the Mother Country, and enact some, which they know perfectly well do not meet with the approval of the Imperial authorities. The Bait Act, for instance, was considered, in Downing Street, both injudicious and impolitic, but it was, nevertheless, allowed to go into operation. It is, in fact, hard to imagine a colony endowed with greater powers of self-government than Newfoundland possesses and exercises.

It is surely not for such a colony to talk about coercion when all that is required of it is to carry out in good faith engagements entered into by Great Britain nearly two hundred years before self-governing powers, with the responsibilities and obligations attached to them, were extended to Newfoundland. The inhabitants of that colony knew all about the provisions of the treaty by which the French claimed fishing privileges on part of its shores. The treaty and the interpretation given to it by the British authorities became, as it were, part of the constitution of Newfoundland when its inhabitants took the management of their own public affairs into their own hands. Those instruments were as much a liability on the colony as a mortgage is on a farm, and when it came into possession was under as binding an obligation to carry out their provisions and stipulations as is the farmer. As regards treaties affecting Newfoundland, the inhabitants when they undertook to govern themselves stepped into Great Britain's shoes. What ever Great Britain could fairly be called upon to do or to allow, the Newfoundlanders took upon themselves to do and to allow. They could not break faith with France, because carrying out the obligations contracted by Great Britain were unpleasant and burdensome, any more than a man, who inherited property burdened by a mortgage, could repudiate the obligation because paying interest for a long term of years, and the principal when it had expired, was unpleasant and burdensome. It took two to make a bargain, and it must take two to change its conditions, or to make any arrangement respecting it.

The French with regard to these fishing privileges and concessions say the original bargain, as interpreted by your own Government, meant so and so. The Newfoundlanders say that it did not, but something else very different. The French insist upon their rights as they understand them. The Newfoundlanders declare that the French are wrong and protest against their exercising the rights they claim. How is the matter to be settled? Are the French to have their way or the Newfoundlanders to have theirs? The case is evidently one for settlement, either by arbitration or by the sword. The Newfoundlanders evidently cannot fight. They are no match for the French nation. Great Britain says in effect, "Settle this dispute by arbitration. Let it be decided in a peaceful way whether the French claims are just and valid." Negotiations are entered into and the French agree to submit one point and perhaps the others to arbitration.

There is no coercion so far, but the Newfoundlanders are not satisfied with this announcement. They want the French to submit the whole case to arbitration. This, Great Britain is more than willing to do, but France is not. What is to be done? Who is to compel France to accept the mode of settlement which Newfoundland dictates, and which Great Britain approves? Nothing less than a resort to the last argument of kings can settle this. But Great Britain is naturally unwilling to accept this terrible alternative.

While this dispute is going on how are the relations as regards Newfoundland to be regulated? Some temporary agreement must be made; there must be some rule acknowledged by both nations or there is no telling how soon acts may be done that will precipitate a rupture between the two countries. Such an agreement is made—the *modus vivendi*—and the Newfoundlanders are indignant. Seeing that the colonies will not legislate upon this treaty matter, the Government of Great Britain finds that the task of carrying out the treaty is left to them. They, therefore, bring down to Parliament an Act which, by an inadvertence, had been repealed. When the Newfoundlanders hear of this they become furiously agitated, and raise the cry of "coercion." Where is the coercion? The Treaty is in force—is binding on both countries. A law is required to

regulate its operation. The Newfoundlanders cannot, or will not, enact this law, therefore Great Britain has no choice but to enact it herself. Britain is not coercing Newfoundland when she does what is necessary to carry out the terms of a treaty made with France before Newfoundland, as a colony, had an existence.

It appears to us that the Newfoundlanders are most unreasonable. It is both their duty and their interest to do all in their power to assist the mother country in arriving at a good understanding with France with respect to the fishery concessions that were so unwisely extended to that country at a time when no one dreamed that Newfoundland would ever become an important colony. They should give the Imperial Government all the help they can to make the best of what all admit to be a bad bargain.

THE EMPRESS OF INDIA.

The arrival of the Empress of India, the first of the Canadian Pacific Company's line of ocean steamships, is an epoch in the history of Victoria. It is a mark to show how far the cities on the Pacific Coast of the Dominion have advanced in the march of progress. When the first ocean steamship entered the port of Halifax, some fifty years ago, Victoria was not even a geographical expression, and British Columbia was less known to Eastern Canadians than is Mashonaland to the British Columbia of to-day. The rise and growth of cities on the Canadian shores of the Pacific have been by no means the least important of the changes that have taken place in British America during the last fifty years.

We have no doubt that the Empress of India is the first of many steamships owned by Canadian companies that will ply between the seaports of British Columbia and the continent and islands of Asia. Other lines will be established to run between British Columbian ports and Australasia and the intervening islands. It does not require supernatural powers to foresee that Victoria, with its many and great advantages, is destined to become the port of arrival and departure of the ships of the principal of these lines.

Great credit is due to the Canadian Pacific railway company for being the first to establish a line of ocean steamships between the Dominion and China and Japan. The sagacity, the courage, the enterprise, and the energy of its directors have won for it a high place in the commercial history, not only of America, but of the world. We have no doubt that its efforts to extend the sphere of the commerce of Canada will be crowned with the most brilliant success, and it is our conviction that the name of the Empress of India will be connected with the greatest system of railways, ocean steamships and cable lines that the world has yet seen.

THE COST OF CONTENTS.

The Boston Advertiser shows that strikes and lockouts have been most expensive to both employers and workmen as well as to the community at large. Here are some of its figures to show the loss that lockouts have caused:

"From the beginning of 1881 to the end of 1886 there occurred within the United States 2,214 lockouts, of these 354 were successful, 1,839 failed utterly, and the remainder were partially successful. The direct loss to employers by these numerous appeals to coercion is placed at \$3,462,261, and to the men affected there, by \$3,157,717. Pending a settlement of these contests, \$1,106,038 were contributed for the benefit of the men locked out, and at the conclusion of the trouble the working force was reduced by the refusal of employers to take back 4,798 persons whom they regarded as particularly detrimental to their interests. The entire number locked out was 175,270, of whom 62,868 were women and girls."

In this, as in other kinds of warfare, both parties suffered terribly, but the balance of loss as well as of misery was on the side of the workmen. Were the results gained worth the cost to either party? We think not. We are quite convinced that results better in themselves and more satisfactory to all concerned could have been gained by less unpleasant and infinitely less expensive means. If both parties tried to understand each other, and gave a reasonable consideration to each other's circumstances and requirements, better settlements than those arrived at could have been effected, with a more friendly feeling established.

The figures as regards strikes are not more pleasant or more encouraging to contemplate.

The same authority says: "During the same interval there were 22,304 strikes, of which 18,342 were ordered by labor organizations. Through their influence 13,411 establishments were closed in the aggregate for 399,047 days. Of these strikes 10,375 were successful, 8,910 failed utterly, and the rest were partial failures. The stated losses are enormous, they being charged up against the strikers and help involved at \$51,816,723, and against the employers at \$20,701,023. The strikers were assisted to the amount of \$3,324,567, and at the end of the contests there were 25,788 men whom employers refused to take back."

Here we see that considerably more than half of the strikes were complete or partial failures. The loss to workmen and employers is simply stupendous. Counting in the sum raised to assist the strikers it was in those six years very nearly \$96,000,000, or \$14,333,333 a year. But the loss in dollars does not show all that the strikes cost the community. What the 13,411 establishments could have produced during the 399,047 days they were closed would have been a benefit to hundreds of thousands of people, directly or indirectly, affected by their being idle. Then the misery suffered by the strikers, their wives, and children and others dependent on them, cannot be set down in figures. A money value cannot be set upon sighs and tears and sleepless nights, and the mental agony of those who, day after day, saw those they loved suffering for the necessities of life. Neither are we able to compute the loss, moral and

material, resulting from the feelings of bitterness and anger and hatred engendered by these twenty-two thousand strikes.

And what has been gained by this \$97,000,000 or so sunk in labor contests in the United States in six years, and the suffering and bad feeling of which they were the occasion? It is said that the condition of the workmen has been ameliorated by these battles between capital and labor. Perhaps so. But we think that the gain has been far less than many who are fond of agitation imagine, and certainly not more than could be achieved by peaceful means.

It would be well for both employers and workmen to enquire seriously and dispassionately into the loss and gain of labor contests. The matter is one of the very first importance, and if it is not made the subject of serious thought and painstaking enquiry by the thinking men of both sides, the most deplorable results will be sure to follow. So far, men who do not think, men who are guided by passion rather than by reason, have had too much influence in the struggle that has been going on for many years between capital and labor. It is time that thoughtful and earnest men should exercise their influence, and not allow themselves to be borne down by those who use threats instead of argument.

One encouraging sign of the times is that good men, men of intellect and extensive knowledge, are taking an active interest in the labor question. Among these is Cardinal Gibbons, who has written an article in the North American Review on "Wealth and its Obligations." He gives good advice to the men of capital and the men of labor. He says, "Let employer and employee come together in amity, with a view to mutual understanding. Let them state their mutual grievances and ascertain their mutual demands; and, temperate Christian counsels reigning, the result will be lasting peace." This is good advice. Will it ever be followed, and will the "peace" which the Philadelphia Convention expects as the consequence of its being acted upon ever be enjoyed?

A RAILWAY CENTRE.

(Vancouver News-Advertiser, April 25.) Some cities, like individuals, are afflicted with monomania. The city of Victoria is one of these places, and at present it is passing through a severe attack of the disease. The peculiar direction which the malady takes in the Capital City, is that of fancying that nature and circumstances have combined to make it a— we had almost said—the railway centre of this continent. As a mad dog manifests symptoms of hydrophobia whenever it sees water, so the people of Victoria develop their feelings in the most acute stage, whenever railway projects in other parts of the Province are under consideration. The residents of the Mainland, we are sure, sympathize with this weakness of their island neighbors, and while pitying the waste of energy which the latter display on this one point, will not fail to take to themselves the lessons which are to be learned from the actions of the people of Victoria.

There are three nostrums presented for the relief of this longing to see a railway start from Victoria and go through to New York or Montreal with its freight of passengers or merchandise. Each of these proposals is backed by enthusiastic promoters, all professing to be able to carry out their schemes to completion. If the taxpayers of Victoria will only foot the bills. The last in the field, but not the least successful in working up public opinion in favor of their scheme, is the project of a railway from Beecher Bay (about 20 miles southwest of Victoria) to Port Crescent, in Washington. The scheme includes a railway to the former point, and then a going, say, eighteen or twenty-four knots respectively, the sword-vessel possessing several times greater maneuvering power. Its commander requires only to thrust his floating sword within the disc area of the condemned propeller and the blades are cut off in rapid succession. The sanguine inventor says of his work: "There can be no doubt concerning the correctness of this method, because complicated torpedoes often fail in the decisive moment, whereas a sword must damage where it hits; secondly, the maneuvers demanded for the application of torpedoes are always impeded by a great number of difficulties."

AN OCEAN TERROR.

A New Invention to Disable the Great Ironclads.

It is Called the Swordship, and it is the Work of a Danish Inventor—A Terrible Agent of Destruction in Maritime Warfare.

When the fleet of nations consisted of big wooden vessels, ironclads constructed a monitor armored against their shots and able to destroy a great number of ships without being damaged itself. Two formidable weapons not in use at that time—the ram and the torpedo—have been introduced, either of which may destroy in a few seconds millions of value in armored vessels. Ships of great size for carrying guns have therefore been furnished with these auxiliaries. The United States in its latest type, says the Chicago Mail, has discarded the gun and the torpedo, and in the Ammen ram places its sole reliance in the spur, the vessel being heavily armored for their displacement and of quick maneuvering qualities. A Danish inventor, conceiving the idea that small rams to destroy the propellers of an adversary are desirable adjuncts to a fleet of war vessels, has designed what he calls a swordship. His plan is for a vessel of one hundred and ten tons displacement, intended for spoiling shafts or propeller blades or punching holes in the bottoms of the smaller ironclads or armored cruisers. His sword is more than ten feet long, and has a sharp point saw to prevent from slipping. Its upper point is six feet below the water level, its lower point being five and a half feet deeper. The sword is carried and supported by two arms which should be as thin as is consistent with strength in order not to impede the maneuvering power. Swordships should be furnished with twin propellers, with a balanced rudder between them, and should have many watertight compartments, some of which, when action is impending, should be filled with water in order to submerge the ship still deeper. The speed ought to be higher than that of torpedo boats of equal power and displacement—that is, over twenty-five knots per hour, because the swordship has no projectiles to discharge and her mission is to destroy the larger game. The conning towers should be armored and arranged so as to lessen as much as possible the shock of collision. Although any kind of propeller can be used the maneuvering power is thought to be especially improved with the two-bladed propellers. The blades are connected by means of a blade-axle which can turn freely in the boss. The thrust of the upper blade is greatest in ordinary propellers, on account of the greater speed of the upper wake, but here its plate angle decreases a little, while the plate of the opposition blade increases in the same ratio. The maneuvering of a small sword-vessel requires only one duty from the commander, according to the inventor—that is that he should be a sailor.

Sitting in the coming-tower the commander is able to concentrate his whole attention upon the maneuvers required to rush upon the enemy and destroy his propellers with a distance of one thousand feet from an ironclad. A big shot would ricochet from the half-submerged deck of the swordship, and as the distance can be passed over in twenty-five seconds the chance of being damaged is little when the vessel is protected against quick-fire guns. Suppose an ironclad and a sword-vessel going, say, eighteen or twenty-four knots respectively, the sword-vessel possessing several times greater maneuvering power. Its commander requires only to thrust his floating sword within the disc area of the condemned propeller and the blades are cut off in rapid succession. The sanguine inventor says of his work: "There can be no doubt concerning the correctness of this method, because complicated torpedoes often fail in the decisive moment, whereas a sword must damage where it hits; secondly, the maneuvers demanded for the application of torpedoes are always impeded by a great number of difficulties."

Search for Civilization.

The Russian Government some time ago decided to make some administrative and educational reforms in Asiatic Russia, and with a view to proceeding intelligently sent to its officials in Siberia interrogatory circular letters inquiring of the natives of the country of considerable antiquities. The presiding officer in the district Alkmalinsk was asked, with the others, as to the progress of civilization in the region he had the honor to superintend. He returned this answer, which was published recently in the Siberian Messenger: "The civilization under my supervision. It may be withdrawn to the Chinese border, although I can not say to a certainty. The Governor, however, has sent out two Cossack horsemen to look it up, and they may have found it at the present writing." In response to the emphatic and rather complimentary comments of the St. Petersburg office on this remarkable statement, the Alkmalinsk official explained that he thought that by "civilization" the Government had meant an obscure tribe of Kirgizes, and that, acting in accordance with this belief, he had instituted the search mentioned in his first answer.

An Unmistakable Index.

The man who pays a debt with an air of cheerfulness that indicates his pleasure in meeting his obligations, says Chicago Journal, may meet with misfortune, may be so heavily dealt with by circumstances as to be unable to pay; but the impression which such a man always leaves upon a community is that, whatever his misfortune may be, he is at heart an honest man.

From the French.

Beautiful Young Lady (at hostess counter)—These stockings strike me as being rather loud.

Polite Salesman—But consider how they would keep your feet from going to sleep.—Harvard Lampoon.

A CLOSE CALL.

A Reporter Secures an Interview, but Comes Near Losing His Life.

"You know I have been in the newspaper business a long time and I was never known to shirk, not even during a riot or blizzard," says an old-timer in the St. Louis Republic. "Well, I came very near tossing up the pencil a few nights ago. It was very cold, and I had to call on Bishop— in reference to some church matters. Taking a car downtown I soon reached the street on which the bishop lived. It was just striking the hour of twelve. But I had to see the bishop. Well, sir, I hunted for the number in the dark for some time. Not finding it, I waited to see if I could meet some straggler who lived in the neighborhood. Pretty soon along came a nicely-dressed young fellow in a rather mellow condition. I asked him if he lived in the neighborhood, and he said yes. The truth is, the young man was none other than the bishop's son. He told me in a semi-articulate way that he would go up to his father's room and wait for him. I was very much relieved, and I went back to my room in question."

"Reaching the outer door he unlocked it and asked me to walk in. I stepped in; he opened the second door and I went into the house. Both doors were now locked. The gas had been turned off. We hunted for a match in vain. Well, the young fellow left me in the darkness, uttering a drowsy promise to return upon I heard him stagger up the stairs all right. He went back several paces until I could detect his footsteps no more. He failed to return. I believe he fell asleep and forgot all about me. I stood there for about fifteen minutes not knowing what to do."

"I made a modest noise. No result. A more decided noise. The same result. I began to walk about, purposely bumping against the furniture. Then something happened. I heard a hoarse voice shout: 'Throw up your hands or you are a dead man.'"

"Up went my hands like a shot. 'Whiz, bang, bang—three bullets rattled over my head. I thought my time was up. 'Do you know, it seems as if I lived my whole life over in the few minutes I was standing there. When the gas was lighted the first person I saw was a big, burly negro.'"

The shots brought the bishop out in his gown, and his young son with him. Explanations followed. The house had been robbed a few nights before, and the negro had been placed in the basement to watch. He fell asleep. My walking about aroused him. He came upstairs, and, seeing my shining hat, which I had forgotten to take off, he asked me to remove it. I secured an interview, bought a new hat the next day, and vowed never to wait in a dark hall, no matter who owned the house."

LIP-RING WEARERS.

A Grotesque and Repulsive Custom Among the Manganya Women.

It is a very curious study to note the variety of fascinating ornamentation in the different nations, and how what may be considered as a beautifier by one race becomes a positive monstrosity and deformity in the eyes of another. One of the most curious decorations in the world is adopted by the women of the Manganya tribe, inhabiting a country in Africa near one of the north-eastern corners of the Zambezi. It is called the "pelele." This is a ring, but it is fixed neither in the ear nor the nose, as with other races, but in the upper lip. It is a ring made of ivory, metal or bamboo, according to the wealth of the wearer; is nearly an inch in thickness, and varies in diameter at the will of the wearer, many being nearly three inches in diameter from outer edge to edge.

When the girls are very young they have the lip pierced with two holes close to the nose, and a small wooden peg inserted to keep the wound from closing. When the wound heals two small holes are left in the lip, into which larger pegs are successively introduced until in about two years the finished "pelele" can be worn. Its effect, when worn, is indescribable.

When at rest it hangs down over the mouth; when food is taken it projects horizontally, like a small shelf, and when the wearer smiles and laughs it admirably elevates itself, turning upside down until its lower edge rests against the bridge of the nose, the tip of the nose appearing through the center, and the eyes looking round each side, writes W. P. Pond, in the Ladies' Home Journal. As the teeth are generally slightly protruding, the effect resembles those of a crocodile, the effect may be better imagined than described. Chikanda Kadze, wife of the great chief, had a "pelele" that hung below her chin.

The origin of this horrible ornament (?) is unknown, and the reasons given for it are amusing, the natives saying: "What kind of a creature would a woman be without a 'pelele'? She would have a mouth like a man and no beard to cover it."

In different districts it varies slightly in shape, being cylindrical, instead of round; or like a flat dish, instead of a ring.

Antiquity of the Indians.

Henshaw, of the Anthropological Society of Washington, declares that the languages of the Indians of this country, of which there were fifty-eight linguistic families and 300 languages and dialects, north of Mexico, at the time of the discovery of America, are none of them related in any way to Asiatic tongues; also as to the origin of the Indian, it must have been in ages so far removed from our own time that the matter is to be reckoned, not in years of chronology, but by the epochs of geologic time.

Good Reasons.

A pastor in Maine resigned because he boarded himself, swept the church, made the fires and rung the bell. The people swore at him, whittled and ate peanuts in meeting time, fired pistols and threw stones at his house, came to church any time before the benediction, laughed loud during the services, etc. He says run is sold openly in the town, and no one tries to enforce the law.

PRESIDENT VAN HORNE.

Talks Over a Few Interesting Matters With a Colonist Representative.

A Railway Ferry Impracticable for a Never Prejudiced the C. P. R.

A Colonist representative, yesterday afternoon, waited on President Van Horne of the C.P.R., in his rooms at the being very cordially received by the chief of the bureau of men. Several considerable interest were talked of following being an epitome of the conversation: In regard to the subject of a ferry between Victoria and Vancouver Van Horne declared that he considered it impracticable, both on account of distance and the force of sea.

Moreover, any one who understood about such matters, would know that a heavy ferry would be more than to transfer the freight in the now followed. A shunting engine required at both ends to pull the cars on. Railway ferries were only used where there were long distances and where dam transport were not present. The narrow gauge project would be immensely expensive, and the cost of the interest on the money which would cover the entire cost of the project. His attention was directed to the letter of "Junius," a childlike letter, in which he supposed that all sensible people had got ideas that the letter cost. He had not supposed that a person had held such an opinion, but he was not accounting for what he said about the C.P.R.'s maps and the vision of Victoria from them, he was aware of any such omission, except as he had spoken of it in the Gold mine. He had not seen the map of the C.P.R. East had misrepresented Victoria as object of benefiting Vancouver. It been thoroughly investigated and found to be without foundation. Besides, any one would promptly dismiss any such idea as a thing. As to the Chinese ships and the discharge of their freight, the company were under contract for the carriage of the freight, and they would not be liable for it. It might be possible to unload here from the East, were it all taken one port on the other side; but the difficulty was that it was not a half-way point, and for that reason it had been possible to keep separate the freight of different points. It could not be expected that the vessel would discharge her cargo in order to receive the incoming mail, and then reload it. The passengers and mails would be taken off here.

The reporter intimated that he had stated that a new and more accessible had been discovered near the Gold mine, and that if it was discovered near a line would be adopted through the mine, so as to make the distance considerably shorter to the coast. Mr. Van Horne declared that surveyors still exploring in the Kootenay country that there was nothing known for a distance of about 100 miles. Moreover, the only other line of communication known of was impossible, because it was necessary to cross the boundary. It was hoped to find a route from the south end of Okanagan Lake, the Fraser Valley, and, as he had trusted that the present survey would have been successful. He had no doubt that if an Australian steamship were built, but as yet there was nothing in the project. The company's agents are endeavoring to promote immigration abroad as much as possible, and to direct a suitable class to the North and the Pacific coast. They lost no opportunity of presenting the advantages of British Columbia. It was to the interest of the company to increase the immigration in this country, and there was no ground for anyone to say that if Vancouver were blotted off, benefit would accrue to Victoria. The agents were to be sent to all the States, and to all the people who accompanied him highly delighted with the appearance and prosperity of Victoria. Mr. Van Horne stated, nothing was to be said about the competition between the Canadian and other roads. Victoria would, in case, be kept on as good a footing as other points. He expected within a year to have a new line of road, and a perfect. In regard to the company's intentions it was making a few local connections in Manitoba in order to carry out interlinking, and would improve and extend its lines as far as possible, and more especially the main line. The detention in the mountains was not very serious nature; a fall of trees was having somewhat impeded travel, but it was not a great work as clearing it away was slow.

Reference having been made to the station of the name of the C.P.R. Con with a trans