The Colonist.

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IN 1908

It is not too soon to speak about what we may expect on Vancouver island in the year 1908 in the way of development. The first thing that everyone will think of is the extension of the E. & N. railway. Doubtless that line will be completed to Alberni next year. The railway also will make a beginning in its great land-clearing scheme. The latter enterprise has not matured as quickly as was expected, but it is not abandoned. The company is only awaiting the decision of the parties, who proposed entering into a contract to do the work. If they decide to go on, clearing will be begun immediately; if they decided not to undertake the contract, the company will handle it itself. Under any circumstances the work will be done. The areas have already been selected. The two things of themselves will mean very much to Vancouver island.

We look for rapid progress at Alberni. The probability of great ocean liners making the head of Alberni Canal their terminus may be open to question. There is plenty of water to float them, but the canal is long and narrow. That is only one feature of the case. Alberni is certain to be a point where extensive lumber mills will be established. It seems likely to be the great coal shipping port of the island. It will be surrounded by a fine fruit-growing region. It may become, and we think it is very likely to become, the site of extensive smelting works. These things all may not be in what we now mean when we speak of Alberni, but they will be in that vicinity. A new and important town is certain to be built up at the head of Alberni Canal, and this whether it becomes a C. P. R. ocean terminal point or not. A good beginning will be made in the development of Alberni next year. This will signify much for the whole West Coast.

Whether there will be any further development in connection with railways on the island next year we are not now in a position to say, but we hope the twelve months will not pass without at least the preliminary steps being taken in that direction. There is certain to be a great influx of people, and we look with confidence for growth along all lines. In short we regard 1908 as certain in all human probability to be first of a series of years of great prosperity so far as Vancouver island is concerned.

IS THIS CIVILIZATION?

The Chief of Police of Vancouver told Mr. Commissioner King the other day that there might be further Oriental riots in that city. There was a time not very long ago, when Europeans, who landed in China, Japan or Korea were the victims of outrages. Occasionally we hear from the interior of China stories of the manner in which missionaries are treated. This makes our blood boil; as it used to boil in the days when the reception accorded to foreigners in the coast cities of that country was the reverse of friendly. True, we explained the outrages by saying that nothing better could be expected from a lot of benighted heathens, but all the same we sent warships to shell them into common decency. We do not try to protect the missionaries in the interior by physical force, because they are too remote, but we claim damages and insist on them being paid. Of course this is because we are the exponents of Christian civilization, the elect of the earth, who have a divine right to walk roughshod over heathen wherever we see fit. What is the use of being a white, civilized Christian if any old heathen has any rights which we are bound to respect. Suppose, however that we happened to be heathen, with complexions that were somewhat yellow, and suppose that we went to a land, which was always telling about the beauties of its religion, the fairness of its laws, the protection accorded every one. And suppose that all we asked in that country was the right to work for people who wished to employ us. And suppose that the population, or a portion of them, came against us with violence and destroyed our property, endangered our lives and tried to drive us out of the country. What would we think about it? We do not want Asiatics in this country. On this point there is little or no difference of opinion. But those people who think that the problem presented by the contact of the two races can be disposed of by rioting in the streets of Vancouver are sadly mistaken. Indeed its solution is rendered the more difficult thereby. The one claim, which the white race could make over the yellow races, which the latter were compelled to admit, was that we protected all people in their legal rights, and that there was safety for all law-abiding persons under our flags. If the Orient is taught that this claim has no foundation in fact, the consequences may be exceedingly serious. Let every legitimate effort be made to prevent an influx of Orientals into Canada; but let us not forget that those who are already here, and those who may legally come here in the future, are entitled to just the same protection from the law as are those of us who were born in the country. We cannot advance any claim to civilization if we make a distinction between the color of men's skins when it comes to their right to live unmolested in a community as long as they obey the laws.

CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION.

A meeting of representatives of the Conservative party of British Columbia will be held at Vancouver on the 22nd and 23rd instant for the purpose of forming a Provincial Association. Elsewhere in today's issue will be found particulars as to the manner in which representatives are to be chosen. We have no doubt that this gathering will prove a conspicuous success. It is timely for the Conservatives of the province to perfect their organization, not only because a Dominion election is not very far away, but because it is important that the party should be got into fighting trim upon general principles. At this particular time, when the feeling of confidence among Conservatives is greater than it has been for many years a convention ought to do a very great deal of good. This party has by the logic of events become the standard bearer of provincial rights, and now is the time to assert its opinions upon that exceedingly important subject and formulate plans for carrying them into effect.

SOCIALISM IN ENGLAND.

The municipal elections in England show that the Socialist movement has met with a check. Out of nearly two hundred boroughs, the Socialists carried only four. The fact that the Liberals made a very poor showing as compared with the Conservatives is also exceedingly significant. During the last few years the Socialists have been apparently making a great deal of progress in the United Kingdom and especially in England. Fears have been expressed that they would soon come to dominate the politics of the country, but the municipal elections seem to remove that bugbear. English Socialism has been a great obstacle to reform. Like Socialism in Canada it is opposed to reform, which its leaders say only signifies a perpetuation of existing conditions. This was particularly evident in connection with the efforts made of late to promote emigration, which the Socialists opposed in every way in their power. The reason of their opposition was that they do not desire to see the condition of the masses of the population ameliorated. They cherish an idea that, if they can prevent anything from being done in that direction, they will precipitate a revolution. Probably they are not very clear what a revolution would mean, and probably, also, they are not, in point of fact, any more bloodthirsty than other people. But they are dreamers of impossible dreams, and they refuse to deal with the practical questions, which come up from day to day. Their propaganda has received a decided set back, and although it is too much to hope that they will be any the less active, it is satisfactory to know that the common sense of the English people can be relied upon to assert itself, when occasion arises.

BY WHAT CAPITAL?

The special correspondent of the Western Mail of Cardiff, who visited Canada a few months ago, closes one of his articles on the Dominion by asking whether England or the United States will furnish the capital that is necessary for the development of this country. It is perhaps of greater importance to the United Kingdom than to Canada how this question shall be answered. We think the claim sometimes made, that an increase in the investments of money from south of the International Boundary, will weaken the feeling of loyalty to British connection among the Canadian people, has no real foundation. Capital is cosmopolitan and it would be difficult to point to a single instance in which any representative of United States investments in this country sought to influence public opinion in favor of the severance of the Imperial tie and the union of the Dominion with the Republic. On the contrary, investors from the United States find so great a degree of security under British institutions as exemplified by the laws and courts of Canada that they would probably be the last people to advocate a change in this respect. But if our neighbors are to furnish the bulk of the capital, which the expanding industries of the country require, it will unquestionably lead to very close commercial relations between the two countries, and this in the long run will be far less beneficial to the United Kingdom from a commercial point of view, than that degree of business intimacy which would be brought about if the requisite capital were furnished from that source. All Canadians would greatly prefer to see the latter course prevail, and we find no difficulty in believing that the British public would do the same.

We are not disposed to complain of the comparative slowness of British investors to seek Canadian opportunities. As a matter of fact there is a very great deal of British capital invested in Canada, more, possibly, than most of us suppose, but undoubtedly in the newer and more speculative lines, people from the United States have shown themselves the more ready to try their fortunes. One reason for this is that they are close at hand and can readily examine anything that is offered. Another is that they are familiar with the lines of investment which Canada presents. It is a great mistake to suppose, as many do, that the British investor is exceptionally timid, for he is quite otherwise. He takes longer chances with his money than any other person in the world. But he has not yet got in the way of looking to Canada as a place to put his money, except in certain lines. For example, a good area of timber land is very soon taken up by United States buyers, but as far as we know very few English moneyed men have been buying timber. Almost any amount of money can be got in the United States for the purchase of Canadian real estate in large blocks, but English capitalists do not appear to have turned their attention in that direction. As for mining, we are not surprised at the slowness with which our friends in the United Kingdom display about taking hold of new properties. These three lines are those in regard to which the most surprise is expressed as to the difficulty of interesting English capital, and we repeat that we do not see any reasonable cause for complaint; not that we would not prefer the money to come from our own people, but because we cannot blame them for not engaging in investments with which they are unfamiliar. But there is a vast field outside of these lines, and it includes industrial and local transportation undertakings. We confess to surprise that the men, who have made Great Britain such a marvellous workshop, have not as yet to any considerable degree realized the opportunities offered by Canada. We suppose this is because the country is yet "in the making," and financial circles, in the United Kingdom, have been chiefly concerning themselves with the larger transportation questions, which are at the foundation of the country's development. While we may regret that more British capital does not find its way into Canada, we ought not to lose sight of the fact that it is to London that our railways go when they want money.

THE DREADNOUGHT'S GUNS.

Since the Dreadnought was launched nearly all the naval powers have been preparing to imitate, if not exceed, her, and it is therefor somewhat of a surprise to read that Admiral Germinet, who has taken command of the French Mediterranean squadron, says: "I consider the Dreadnought a gross error on the part of the British Admiralty." He states this great ship was built in accordance with erroneous ideas held up to a few months ago concerning the cause of the naval successes of Japan during the war with Russia. He disputes the claim that the defeat of the Russian fleet of Admiral Togo was due to the use of heavy guns. He says it was on account of the use of shells containing a large explosive charge. At first, he states, the Japanese used 12-inch shells having a heavy casing and a small charge, but finding results unsatisfactory, they employed the other variety. We quote from an interview with the Admiral, published in Le Journal of Paris:

It was with these shells that they were armed at Tsu-shima, and it was they that gave the Japanese the victory. Bursting immediately on contact, these shells evolve enormous heat—as the melted steel panels on board the Iena have shown—and produce a great quantity of deleterious gases which poison all those who breathe them. It must not be said that the Japanese gunnery was wonderful. The secret of their success lay in the large quantity of explosive in their shells.

He further says that such shells cannot be used in the 12-inch guns carried by the Dreadnought, because the thinness of the metallic case would render them incapable of withstanding the force of the explosion of the gun charge. He recommends the use of quick-firing guns of medium calibre using shells of large explosive power. The fact that Japan is building at least one vessel of the Dreadnought type seems to indicate that Admiral Germinet's views do not appear to be held by the naval experts in that country.

JAPANESE IMMIGRATION.

We commend the action, which it is said the Dominion government will take, in authorizing Mr. Mackenzie King to investigate the whole subject of Japanese immigration. While the observations made by Mr. King a few days ago, as reported to the press, had somewhat of a freshness, which rendered them not just the sort of reading one would like, yet he is admirably qualified for the work to which he is to be assigned. He appears to possess those qualities which are invaluable in an investigation of any kind, and he approaches his duties with a singularly well balanced mind. At one time we were afraid that a very useful official was going to be spoiled to make what might possibly have been a not particularly valuable politician; but we are glad that the country is yet in the enjoyment of his services in a capacity, where he has been able to avoid even the appearance of partizanship.

It is very desirable that the question of Japanese immigration should be probed to the bottom. Our own view of the case has always been that the influx of coolies has been engineered by persons who were making money out of it. It was not the spontaneous movement of a people seeking relief from overcrowding at home, and this was one of the reasons why we refused to be stampeded into anti-Oriental agitation. We could see no reason why a few agents, on the lookout for a few dollars out of the earnings of Japanese, and a few irresponsible agitators in our own country should be permitted to destroy the friendly relations of two nations and interfere with the development of a line of trade which means very much to Canada, and especially to British Columbia.

A FLAG INCIDENT.

The other day in Seattle a lady telephoned to the Chief of Police asking if he would not order her neighbors to pull down the Union Jack, which was flying on his premises. The Chief replied that he had no authority to do so. Then she wanted to know if he could not compel him to put the United States flag above the other, and once more the Chief replied that he could not. A few minutes later a man called at the residence of the offender and entered a protest on behalf of the lady, and the latter thereupon, being a man of peace, took down the objectionable piece of bunting. The matter is not important in itself. It is simply another instance of the singular narrowmindedness, which prevails in the United States; but there is a lesson in it for Canadians. The people of this country are very much given to flying the United States flag for decorative purposes, and sometimes out of compliment to visitors. No Canadian cares anything about it, or rather none would care, if there was a little reciprocity, but when they know, as many of them are beginning to understand that what is meant as a compliment, or has really no meaning at all, is understood by people from the United States to be prompted by desire to acknowledge the surpassing greatness of that country, they do not like to see the Stars and Stripes flying in this country under any circumstances whatever except officially. No Canadian objects to the hoisting of the United States flag by the United States consul. In fact, if he should omit to display it, there would be a feeling of surprise. But there is a difference between the people of the two countries, much the same as that between the man who knows that he is respectable and one who is not quite sure about it.

WHERE THE BLAME LIES.

A good deal is being said nowadays about the responsibility of the Liberal members in the House of Commons from this province for the failure of the government to safeguard the country against an influx of Japanese, while providing for the application of the Anglo-Japanese treaty to Canada. We do not suppose that it would have been possible in an Act of that nature to have included a provision excluding Japanese from the country. That would be an absurdity upon the face of it, but there ought to have been concurrent legislation making general provisions in respect to immigration on the lines of the Natal Act. It is for their failure to insist upon some measure of this kind being adopted that they ought to be held responsible, and no words can be too strong in condemnation of their utter lack of appreciation of their duty in that regard. It seems to us that it was especially the duty of Mr. Templeman, who holds a seat in the Cabinet, to have directed the attention of his colleagues to the necessity of such legislation, and his omission to do so cannot be excused.

But we think the real fault must be sought even further back. During the last ten years the British Columbia legislature has vainly sought to regulate Oriental immigration into the province, and every effort has been frustrated by the course pursued by the Laurier ministry. In 1897 a Bill was passed forbidding the employment of Chinese or Japanese upon certain work. The Colonist defined its position in respect to such legislation while the measure was pending. It pointed out that by the B. N. A. Act the right to legislate respecting aliens was conferred upon the Dominion Parliament, and that any enactments passed at Victoria having such an application would certainly be disallowed at Ottawa. The fate of this measure of 1897 showed that we were right, for Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney was instructed to withhold his assent to the Bill, which he did. Since then all attempts to restrict such immigration or the privileges of Orientals in the province have met with substantially the same fate. They received the lieutenant-governor's assent and were promptly disallowed, until this year, when Lieutenant-Governor Dunsmuir withheld assent from the Bowser Bill. There never has been the least doubt since 1897 that the Dominion government did not propose to permit the legislature of this province to deal with the Oriental question. It is not necessary to inquire, therefore, whether the provisions of the B. N. A. Act in regard to immigration do not vest sufficient authority in the local house to pass the needed legislation. The right of disallowance is not governed by constitutional limitations, but may be exercised upon grounds of policy.

It will be recalled that Mr. Joseph Chamberlain at one time wrote a despatch, in which he pointed out that the remedy against an influx of Orientals was by the passage of a measure on the lines of the Natal Act, and, if memory serves us aright, he expressly said that this was a matter for the Dominion Parliament. Whether he did so or not is not material, since, as such legislation would not be considered as opposed to the policy of the Imperial government, it was very clear that the Dominion Parliament was the body to pass it, and for two reasons: first, because such a law ought to be applicable to all Canada alike, and second, because the Dominion government would not consent to the passage of such legislation by one of the provinces. Granting that it was desirable to restrict Oriental immigration to a minimum, it is very clear that the only way in which it could have been accomplished, in view of the policy of the Dominion government in respect to local Acts on the subject, was by means of an Act of the federal Parliament. This is so very clear that it seems as if the only logical conclusion from the facts is that the present Dominion government has not desired to place any further obstacles in the way of Oriental immigration than such as are provided in the law imposing the $500 head tax upon Chinamen. If an opposite policy had prevailed and the Dominion government had taken hold of the question when it began to be acute and had passed a law providing certain tests similar to those, which the legislature of this province has vainly endeavored to enforce, there would have been no Oriental question.

While the Laurier cabinet is primarily responsible to the people for the omission to pass such a law and directly answerable for the existing state of things, the people of British Columbia must look to their representatives and hold them to account. Mr. Templeman has been either in the Senate or the House of Commons during substantially all the time during which this subject has occupied public attention, but we cannot recall a single occasion upon which he voiced the sentiments of the people of British Columbia in reference to it, except perhaps as to the Chinese head tax. Mr. Ralph Smith has been a conspicuous member of the House of Commons during the same period, and if he made any effort to restrict Oriental immigration generally we have forgotten the occasion. So we may also say of Messrs. Macpherson, Sloan, Ross and Galliher. The sole exception is Mr. Kennedy, but his protest was ignored by his colleagues. We can understand that, if one should ask Sir Wilfrid Laurier why he did not request Parliament to pass a measure like the Natal Act, he might reply that the people of British Columbia had sent representatives to Ottawa who had his ear, and that although he had advised the Governor-General to disallow all enactments of the Provincial legislature to that effect, none of these gentlemen had ever protested or suggested that Parliament should itself deal with the question. We do not say that this excuses him, but we do say that it shows the degree of the responsibility which rests upon the shoulders of the men, who have by their inaction in this regard completely misrepresented the wishes of the people whom they are supposed to represent. There would have been no Oriental question in Canada, if the representatives of the province in the House of Commons, who have had the confidence of the Laurier ministry, had not failed utterly in their duty. For this the people must hold them responsible, and they will do so whenever opportunity offers.

A very gratifying statement was made in London the other day at the annual meeting of the White Pass & Yukon Railway Company. The chairman announced during the course of his address that the past year had been the most prosperous since the earliest years of the company. He hoped that the Canadian parliament would pass the act providing for an extension of fourteen miles next session, so that the construction might be completed next summer.

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