

The Colonist.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1895.

OUR FISHERIES.

The following paragraph is clipped from the Monetary Times, of Toronto, of the 22nd instant:

"I have been struck by the view expressed by the general manager of the Bank of Montreal," writes a subscriber, "that the British Columbians have richer mines in their sea than in their hills, or at least as rich. I have some time ago formed the same conclusion, and I wondered very much the Dominion Government, who have done so much for our agriculture by their experimental stations, and fostering care in many ways, have not tried to do more for the fisheries of British Columbia. No, doubt, at first, when you think of the record of salmon packed in the past season, you will say an industry such as this requires no encouragement. The salmon is a fine fish, so is halibut, hake or herring. They have them all in Newfoundland; but still, nothing but cod is there considered and spoken of as a fish. Now, they have undoubtedly valuable cod in the Pacific, but have never yet succeeded in locating the banks, which, if done, would mean enormous wealth, and, as far as I can learn, the Dominion Government have never yet done anything to help them in this direction.

This writer has broached a subject which is of very great interest to the people of British Columbia. The Dominion Government has done very little indeed towards developing the fisheries of British Columbia, and it could have done a great deal at a comparatively small expense. The Dominion steamer, the Quadra, is in British Columbia waters all the year round. She is for a considerable part of the time idle. She could have been employed for a month or two in each year in exploring the fishing grounds of the coast. The work would be a holiday trip for one of the experts of the Department of Fisheries and its results would probably be of incalculable value to the Province. It is perhaps true that the Province has not hitherto been in a position to avail itself to any very considerable extent of the wealth of its sea fisheries, but the time has come when any important discovery will be immediately followed by development which will be profitable to all who take part in it. We have been informed that codfish—the true cod—swarms in the Northern waters of the Province, but exactly where they are to be found is known to very few.

The "skil" or black cod is a most valuable fish, which has only to be known to be appreciated. It is, as far as we know, peculiar to the seas that wash our shores. But comparatively little is known of its habits and its haunts, except perhaps by the Indians. Exploration as regards this most palatable fish might result in very valuable discoveries. And the same may be said of halibut, sardines, herring, and other fish. Very little is comparatively known about them, yet our fisheries, as the Manager of the Bank of Montreal is credited with saying, may be of more value to the inhabitants of the Province and to the Dominion generally than our mines. It is certainly true that efforts were being made by the Department of Marine and Fisheries to find out something about the fishing capabilities of the Province.

AN INTOLERABLE EVIL.

Claim jumping is a most serious offence and the claim jumper is not only a despicable but a dangerous member of a mining community. His main object is in a mean and underhanded way to steal from the honest prospector the results of his hard toil, his privations and his hardships, and to take an unfair and a cruel advantage of his unsuspecting simplicity and his want of knowledge of the intricacies of the law. He is one of the most disgusting of human parasites.

It might be thought that the men who legislate for a mining community would exercise all the ingenuity they possessed to discourage the claim jumper and to make his schemes and devices unavailing. But if the legislators of British Columbia have had this object in view they have not succeeded in accomplishing it, for it is still possible for the claim-jumper not only to jump the claim which an honest prospector has already discovered, staked and recorded, but he can attempt to get possession of a claim on which thousands of dollars have already been expended. He, by taking advantage of any slip which the bona fide miner may have inadvertently made and of the technicalities of the law may force the owner of the claim to defend his rights in a court of law and perhaps deprive him altogether of the fruits of his labor and his enterprise. He may also jump a claim on which work has been done and to which he has not even the shadow of a right, for no other purpose than to levy blackmail on the mine owners who, rather than be worried and delayed by a law suit, may be tempted to buy the sounder off.

This is no fancy picture. It is a correct description of the state of things that exists in this province to-day, for we read in the Rossland Miner of a late date that "a whole group of prospects in the south belt have been jumped during the past two weeks." The result, it says, "is that much indignation has been aroused, and some decisive measures may be looked for on the part of individuals as well as courts of law. The matter has assumed a really serious form, and a crisis will no doubt be reached pretty soon."

The indignation is natural, and may be productive of unpleasant results. But the mystery to the uninitiated is how it comes to pass that such a state of things is possible. How is it that two claims can be recorded for the same place of ground? Is there nothing to prevent the second claim being recorded even after it is well known that work has been done and money been spent on the mine by the man who recorded it first. Has the Recorder no means of

identifying a claim? and why is it that he cannot refuse to record a claim for a piece of ground which has already been recorded in his office? All the claims which the Rossland Miner mentions as being jumped must have been recorded twice—first by the bona fide prospector and afterwards by the claim jumper. It seems to us that this sort of thing is preventable and should be prevented. It ought to be impossible for the claim jumper to obtain the aid of the law and the officials of the Government in carrying out his nefarious transaction. There can be no doubt that the man who tries to get possession of a claim that has been staked out and worked upon by an honest prospector is guilty of a dishonest act, and it is surely not too much to ask that it should be made an illegal one. We have good authority for contending that claim jumping is an offence against good morals and the welfare of the community demands that it should be put down with a strong hand. Mr. Justice Crease in a judgment which attracted a great deal of attention at the time it was delivered and which received the cordial approval of the whole community, said:

While more colorable working, or neglect of working, should, under the stringent provisions of the act in that behalf, be followed by forfeiture of the privileges which the holders have been proved by experience unworthy to retain, it is of the utmost public importance in a mining country requiring the safe investment of capital for its development and the steady employment of labor, that the practice of jumping claims by persons who, not working themselves, make a business of hunting for accidental or unintentional slips in records happening to men more engaged in hard work underground than accustomed to clerical—hard-working prospectors, who undergo fatigue and hardships in bringing hidden wealth to light—should be discouraged; as they always have been by this court. They are the parasites who always hang about rich mining camps.

Long experience in mining camps, including British Columbia itself, from Cariboo downward, shows that there is no more fertile source of insecurity of investments (and money is a sensitive plant) ill-blood, ill-feeling, not unfrequently amounting to violence and bloodshed—than the practice of what is known to miners by the terms of jumping claims.

A more forcible condemnation of claim-jumping than the above could hardly have been penned, and experience, often dearly bought, has shown that it is as just as it is forcible. Seeing, then, the evils which this iniquitous and despicable practice produces, are not the authorities of the Province justified in using the powers with which they are invested to put it down and to keep it down? The claim-jumper should not only receive no aid or countenance direct or indirect from any quarter, but he should be treated as an enemy to the public welfare.

A SCEPTIC'S ESTIMATE.

The Portland Oregonian is one of those who do not think much of Schlatter and his works. It sets the man down as a lunatic, and it regards those who place any faith in the healing power he is said to possess as very little better. They are at best emotional people of weak minds who deceive themselves. This is part of what it says: Schlatter's history, traced step by step up to his present notoriety, shows that there is nothing unusual, still less miraculous, in the career he has chosen. For a number of years a fisherman on Long Island sound, and afterward a shoemaker, who was considered a "trifle insane," he passed as a self-supporting, erratic fellow. Later, he became a socialist and had beautiful dreams, of which he told his neighbors. Following one of these he went West and invested his savings in a silver mine, losing all. In the disappointment that ensued, his mind became affected, and this, in the view of his Long Island acquaintances, is the basis of his present prominence in mysticism.

Of course, civilization is not responsible for the appearance of Indian ghost-dancers and white Schlatters. These are freaks of an emotional type which certain conditions, operating through certain mental types, may produce. But we really have a right to expect something better of civilization than that it should permit crowds of at least ordinarily intelligent people to flock to the presence of one of these freaks, expect to be cured of serious illness, hideous deformity, or infirmity through loss of sight or hearing, by merely touching him, or even by gaining possession of a handkerchief which he had held. Such an exhibition of wholesale credulity would be amusing were it not so pitiful and humiliating. Its only excuse lies in the distraction that serious illness or other infirmity induces, and in the constant proclamation in high places of the miracle as facts, the story of which has come down to us through the centuries.

This is slashing criticism; but is its argument sound, or its logic convincing?

THE U. S. GOLD RESERVE.

The Americans are again troubled about their gold reserve. Last week it fell considerably below the safety line, and the prospect was that the drain would still continue. This is what the New York Times less than a week ago said about the situation:

With the unexpectedly large shipments of gold this week the reserve of the Treasury drops to \$82,000,000. A like draft next week would bring it to \$75,000,000, at which point it has been reported that the Administration would deem it wise to strengthen the reserve by such means as are at its disposal. Meanwhile, the decision of the Treasury Department to sell gold bars at a premium of one-sixteenth—the stock of free coined gold being low—may have a certain effect in checking exports, though how much cannot be said.

HOME INDUSTRIES.

A British Columbia housekeeper who has not thought much about what is produced in the country, asks what home industries are there to encourage? There are many, and at our very doors. Every housekeeper needs preserves and pickles and sauces. These are all manufactured at home and of the best quality. The children are fond of sweets, and no confectionery that is imported is purer, handsomer or more wholesome than that manufactured in this city. Soap is an article used in the household every hour of the day. Good soap, both for the laundry and the toilet, is manufactured in Victoria. If everyone patronized the home factories, the finest varieties of soap would soon be made here.

As good bread, biscuit and cake are made in Victoria as can be turned out of any establishment in the Dominion. Why buy the imported articles when as good are made at home? There are people who imagine that goods brought from abroad are necessarily better than those made at home, and they are thunderstruck when they see—as was seen at the exhibitions held here and in other parts of the province—work that compares favorably with any that can be turned out in the older and what are considered the more favored cities of the Dominion. Machinery made in Victoria will compare, as to strength and finish, most favorably with articles of a similar nature made elsewhere. The boots and shoes manufactured in British Columbia factories and workshops are highly esteemed, and they deserve the reputation they have gained. The products of the British Columbia pottery are all good of their several kinds, and this home industry well deserves the patronage of British Columbians in all parts of the Province. British Columbia workers in wood, iron, leather and cloth are as skillful as any of their contemporaries anywhere, and are deserving of the patronage of the people of the Province. They are all doing their best to keep up the reputation of the Province, and they all spend their money within its borders, and consequently ought to be patronized in preference to strangers living at a distance, who have no interest in the Province, and who do nothing directly to promote its welfare.

THE SITUATION.

A good deal has of late been written about the Manitoba school question, but there does not appear to be the slightest change in the situation with regard to it. The Government of Manitoba occupies precisely the same position on the question as it did when the Provincial Legislature was prorogued. It is said by a number of persons, all of them irresponsible and unauthorized, that the Government of Manitoba is prepared to make a compromise, that it is willing to grant concessions to the minority which would place them in pretty much the same position as they would be in if the school board and greatly misrepresented remedial order had been favorably received and its terms complied with. But it is to be feared that this is a mere surmise made by some peace-loving politician or journalist. So far, Mr. Greenway has been silent on the subject, and the attitude of his newspaper organ is still uncompromising.

There are, however, many persons in Manitoba who ardently desire to see this troublesome business amicably and satisfactorily settled. They believe that this can be done without any sacrifice of principle on either side. These persons see that the people of Manitoba incur a very great responsibility and will be in no respect bettered if they permit their school question to become a matter of Federal concern. It would be far better, they think, to take steps to meet the wishes of the minority than to force the Federal Parliament to enact an education law for Manitoba. It is beginning to be seen and to be acknowledged that the right of Manitoba to legislate in the matter of education is not absolute and unrestricted, and that under certain circumstances it is both the right and the duty of the Federal Parliament to interfere in the educational affairs of their province. This the Manitoba Free Press, which has all along in a moderate but a firm way opposed federal interference, freely admits. In its issue of the 25th, in an article on the school question, it says: "Let us not deceive ourselves, therefore, in this matter. Parliament has the right to interfere, and the Government that controls Parliament says that unless a settlement shall be concluded in the meantime it will interfere. There is danger that interference will prove prolific of evils of which no man can foretell the consequences. We are ready enough to blame the Federal Government for the trouble that threatens us, and that it would be largely responsible the Free Press at least has freely charged; but it is quite certain that no blame would attach to ourselves as citizens of the Province most deeply affected? Would it not be the part of wisdom to clear our own skirts of blame or responsibility?"

But has Manitoba no duty to perform in the premises? Have we only to sit down quietly under the situation and take what comes, making no effort to reach a settlement and promising consolation to ourselves in the violence of our protests after the evil has been committed? This may suit the present generation, but posterity will likely accuse us of negligence or something worse if we do nothing to protect interests that are ever more theirs than our own. We urge again as a protection due to the Province that our Legislature be convened to give such relief as will remove all pretenses for interference at Ottawa. This we can do without offence to our dignity or self-respect."

It is to be hoped that sensible and moderate counsel like this will prevail in Manitoba. The position of the Dominion Government

is such as will make any steps which the Manitoba Government may take towards a fair and reasonable compromise easy and pleasant. They have, in fact, made the first advances. They have not willingly undertaken to deal with the Manitoba school question. It has been forced upon them by the action of persons over whom they have no control. But when it was once made clear that they must take action with regard to it they did not shrink from the duty, difficult and unpleasant as they knew it to be, which under the Constitution they were obliged to perform. They took the course which the Constitution pointed out for them. They did not swerve from that course in the slightest degree. It can easily be understood that if the question can be settled at all satisfactorily without their further interference and the interference of parliament, they will gladly do all that they can to promote such a settlement. This is how the matter now stands. It remains entirely with the Manitoba Government whether or not the school question can be settled without the interposition of the Federal authority.

YOUTHFUL DEPRAVITY.

A great deal is said in these days about youthful depravity, and crimes are committed by boys and girls which appear to justify the censures and the lamentations of those who deplore and condemn the wickedness of the youth of the present day. But there is a good deal to be considered before it can be admitted that the young people of the present generation are in any respect worse than the young people of past generations.

For one thing we live in an age of great publicity. Everything is known by everybody. A crime committed by a youth in these days is telegraphed to the ends of the earth, and men and women of many nations read all about it. The newspapers of to-day contain a record of the crimes committed in nations whose populations aggregate hundreds of millions. On this continent alone the news collectors gather news for over seventy millions of people. In the days of our fathers the area of publicity was very much narrower. The newspaper reading public was much smaller and the news collectors much fewer in number than they are now, and greatly less enterprising. Naturally the crimes committed in a population of say fifty millions must be fewer than the crimes committed in a population of a hundred millions. And then when the greater enterprise of the news collector of to-day, say nothing of his more active and more fertile imagination, is compared with the slow and clumsy methods of the news-mongers of past generations, it will be seen even if juvenile crime and youthful depravity are no greater in these days than they were, say fifty years ago, when the old men and women of to-day were boys and girls, a very great deal more is heard about them, and they will consequently appear to be greater and more general. We have a notion, if a fair comparison could be made, it would be found that the youth of the present day are no worse in any respect than the youth of other days in the distant past.

Although we are reluctant to judge the boys and girls of our own time harshly and to make comparisons unfavorable to them with the boys and girls of former generations, we are quite free to confess that both our boys and our girls could be and ought to be a good deal better than they are. Children in these days are not so strictly brought up and are not treated with such severity as the children in the time of our fathers and grandfathers. They have much more freedom and consequently the observer has far better opportunities of seeing them as they really are. This may lead him, if he is at all prejudiced in favor of old times, to form harsh judgments of them. But this greater freedom is in our opinion a good thing for the young, though here again we are forced to admit it is often abused. But children have their rights. They should not be continually repressed. They should not be under perpetual restraint. They should be allowed to be natural and their faculties permitted to develop freely. We do not think that severity bordering upon cruelty has a tendency to make young people strong minded or to promote their moral growth.

But on the other hand injudicious indulgence weakens the character and gives evil propensities a chance to grow. This we think is the great fault of the modern system of rearing children. They in too many cases early acquire a contempt for parental authority. They become the masters and the mistresses of the household and often the most intolerable of tyrants. It is not surprising that children whose every whim is deferred to, whose faults are not checked and who do not know what discipline is, turn out badly. It would be rather surprising if they turned out well. In America the laxity of parental rule and the tyranny of children are most observable and it is in America that we hear most about youthful depravity. But there are already indications of a change for the better. Parents are beginning to assert themselves, and it is to be hoped they will generally soon be convinced that there is a golden medium in household rule between cruel severity and weak indulgence, which is conducive to healthy development in morals as well as to physical well-being. We trust that the elders of the next generation will not feel themselves justified in attributing the crimes and the vices of youth to the careless and the foolish way in which they were brought up.

The Japanese government of late encourages emigration. Great numbers of Japanese are going to the Sandwich Islands, where they will ultimately enforce their recognition as citizens. Borneo is another place settled by them. Central America also welcomes them as steady, sober workers, and Guatemala receives them in great numbers.



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