

Duty and Destiny.

It is interesting and it ought not to be unprofitable to watch the current of events and read the history of nations—to study those larger questions and enterprises which agitate nations and concern the world; but it would neither be wise nor beneficial to permit our minds to be pre-occupied with that class of subjects to the neglect of those of a more home and practical character. That the course of empire is westward has, indeed, become a truism. Even now the Red Man slowly and sadly climbs the Western mountains and reads his doom in the departing sun. Here, on the Pacific, must be the seat of empire. Here must rise up a giant Anglo-Saxon power that will give civilization and laws to the world. We are here as the honored pioneers, and to us, consequently, attach grave responsibilities. To us belongs the honor of laying the foundations, so to speak, of British Dominion in the Great West. The honor is great; but the responsibility is still greater. There is a keen and most able competitor for supremacy on this continent, and it must be clear that if the Imperial and Dominion Governments do not push empire westward with more than their wonted alacrity there is danger that empire will slip from their grasp. While the Lion sleeps the Eagle may carry away the noble prize. There must, therefore, be prompt and earnest working. It is not fun and talk that is needed now. Purpose must not be allowed to exhale itself in mere pretensions, nor strength to exhaust itself by flux of words. We must not think to set a plant to grow with its heels in the air and then look for roots, flowers and fruit, all by the same process of excitation. Nature does her grandest works of construction in silence; and although what Carlyle calls the 'Silences' are the least honored of all the minor gods of the present day, it is by a quiet and manly discharge of present duty, by pluck and plod that we shall best perform our part.

Regarding the future from our present standpoint in this colony, there is doubtless much to discourage and to try. The colony has been brought very low. The people must be willing to share the blame with the Government. Nay, it is the fault of the people that the Government has been what it has. United and determined action would have moulded it to the popular will long ago. But divisions, petty differences and jealousies have done their work, and have left an imbecile Government complete and undisturbed master of the situation. There is a tide in human affairs that casts men into tight places, and sometimes leaves them there like stranded lobsters. If they choose to lie where the breakers have flung them, expecting some grand billow to take them on its shoulders and carry them to smooth water, the chances are that their hopes will never be realized. As colonists we have been well-nigh stranded. A Government chiefly remarkable for fecklessness and selfish prodigality has pursued a course of dastard nothingness, until we are left high and dry. Let us not act the part of the lobster; but, instead of bemoaning the past, let us, drawing from it what lessons and warnings we may, strike out with boldness and self-reliant energy. Let us ever bear in mind that

To mourn a mischief that is past and gone,  
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.  
What cannot be proved? When fortune takes,  
Patience her injury a mockery makes.  
The rebel that smiles steals something from the thief;  
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

As the representatives of Great Britain on the Pacific, as the pioneers, the layers of the foundation of the Greater Britain of the West, we must not be content with folding our arms and singing 'Rule Britannia.' It greatly behooves us to be up and doing, or we may yet be led by the inexorable logic of events to sing 'The Star Spangled Banner.' British Columbia needs the best efforts of the colonists just now. It cannot be denied that the heaven of uncertainty and apprehension is doing its work. Continued speculation and doubt as to the probable immediate future is not a condition calculated to further contentment or progress. Men are distracted by the discussion of theories from the practical duty of the day. The people must arise in their might and take the position which befits them as Britons. They must become the arbiters of their own destiny. The people of this colony will never feel themselves true men until they shake off the political fetters by which they have become dwarfed and despoiled—until they become freemen, reinstated in those rights purchased by the best blood of their ancestors, and of which they have been so truly and audaciously deprived in this colony.

From Cariboo.

Mining operations are still a little backward at Cariboo and few claims are yet taking out money, but the greatest confidence prevails in the result of the ensuing season's work. We clip the following from the Sentinel of the 16th inst.:

On William Creek the Barker Co washed up 2600 last week. The Cariboo Co washed up about 8000 up to Thursday this week. The Foster-Campbell Co commenced washing from their lower shaft on Wednesday. The Chipp, Diller, Sheepskin, Molanes, Lil- loet, Independent, Forest Rose and a few smaller companies were working this week. The Ballarat Co are preparing to wash. On Stout Gulch the Talvold claim paid a small dividend for last week. On Anderson Creek the Warren Co got 10400, including a 7000 place. On Lowhee Creek the Victoria Co got 27500 for last week.

A few miners have left for Omineca, but there will not be a rush from here unless more exciting news than hitherto received should be forthcoming.

The snow is melting fast, but the rise in the creeks is hardly perceptible. The Sentinel thinks the water is held by the soft earth until summer when a copious supply will be provided for the miners.

PROTESTANT ECUMENICAL COUNCIL.—Preparations are in progress for holding a Protestant Ecumenical Council in New York during next September. The gathering will be under the auspices of the Evangelical Alliance, and will be attended by eminent divines representing every evangelical body of Christians in the world. Four or five hundred delegates are expected from Great Britain and the Continent, with probably as many from various parts of America. The building of the Young Men's Christian Association will be the place of meeting, and arrangements are being made so that there may be discussions in English, French and German in the different halls. Interpreters and translators have been engaged to render all the papers into English for publication. The intention is to have a sermon or paper on some important topic from each of the distinguished gentlemen attending the Council. The matter is said to be attracting very great interest.

There is some probability that we of the Pacific shall have an opportunity to watch the results of a governmental change of telegraph lines. Allusion was made in the Alta yesterday to the fact that a subsidy granted for the support of the British Columbia line on the mainland was to be raised by tax on imported spirits. It is now said that there is an inclination on the part of the Government of British Columbia to take the telegraph into its own hands for management, on terms which have been offered by the company owning the line. If the change should be made, the public will observe the experiment with considerable interest, as it will be the first instance of the kind in this country. It ought to be said, by the way, that the tax on spirits imported into British Columbia, laid for amuseur purposes, is fifty cents per gallon, not fifty per cent, as before stated.—S. F. Alta.

AUSTRALIAN HEAT.—December in Australia was remarkable for the number of fires in towns and country, many of which were supposed to be the work of incendiaries. Besides, sparks from threshing machines were in some instances the cause of great destruction on farms, and extensive fires in the bush were raging in many districts. Fires there rage with great severity, often because of the great heat of the weather, which dries everything combustible to a condition as inflammable, almost, as tinder. On the 23d of last January the thermometer at the Government Observatory at Melbourne stood at 145 degrees in the sun and 107 degrees in the shade. What should we in Victoria think had we such a day as that?

THE ENTERPRISE arrived from New Westminster yesterday at 5 P. M. with the mail and Bernard's Express from Cariboo. Among the passengers were Mr Cornwall, of Ashcroft, Mr and Mrs McMicking, Rev Mr Browning and wife and Mr Hugh Nelson. About \$80,000 in gold was brought for the banks and on private account.

LOWER-RIVER ITEMS.—The body of Mr Goudie of Quesselmouth, has been interred at Yale. The fireman of New Westminster will parade to-morrow. The occasion of Rev Mr Browning, an early Gospel pioneer, leaving for the East is made the subject of a complimentary paragraph in the Guardian.

FROM NANAIMO.—The steamer Sir James Douglas, Capt Clarke, arrived from Nanaimo and Comox at 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon. Among her passengers were Mr Morley, J. P. and Messrs Baily, Webb and Peck. The ship Shooting Star had arrived from San Francisco and was loading.

ROYAL ASSENT.—Her Majesty's assent to an Ordinance passed last year, granting a supplemental supply of \$134,466 98 for the contingent service of the years 1867-7, respectively, is announced in the Government Gazette.

NEW POST-MASTERS.—The following Post-masters have been gazetted:—At Kamloops, Mr Charles; at Duck & Pringle's, on the Postal route to French Creek, Mr Duck.

TELEGRAPHIC.—Mr McMicking, late operator at Yale, having been promoted to succeed Mr A. G. Richardson, (who goes to England,) as agent for the W. U. Telegraph Company at Victoria, arrived last evening.

It is a well-known fact that the Emperor of Russia has repeatedly had terrible attacks of delirium tremens. During these attacks he has been tortured by the belief that he murdered his father, Nicholas, and poisoned his eldest son.

Odd Fellows' Anniversary Festival.

ORATION OF BRO. THE HON. JOHN ROBSON, DELIVERED AT THE VICTORIA THEATRE, APRIL 26, 1870.

MR. CHAIRMAN, OFFICERS AND BROTHERS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.—We are assembled here to-day to celebrate the 11th anniversary of the institution of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows on this continent, and the duty which devolves upon me is at once agreeable and painful. Agreeable, because I esteem it no small honor to have been unanimously chosen as Orator of the day by both of the Lodges under whose auspices we are now convened, while yet with my foot upon the lowest round of that mystical ladder leading to such sublime heights in our Order. Painful, because my conscious inability to do anything like justice to the great and glorious theme of the day.

In the performance of the duty which the partiality of the Brothers has assigned me in the exercises of the day I shall not attempt anything like an "oration," but rather endeavor, by a few simple, homely remarks, to present our Institution before you in such a light as may tend to dispel some of the popular prejudices which it has had to encounter in all ages and communities, by telling you in plain words its principles and its objects; and in the first place let us take a hasty glance at the origin and history of Odd Fellowship.

Some have gone very far back to look for its origin, and authoritatively claiming for it antiquity coeval with that of our race, and boldly asserting that Adam was the first Odd Fellow. And starting as this assertion may seem it will be admitted that there is some show of truth about it; for if Adam was not an Odd Fellow in the mystical sense, it will readily be conceded that he was an Odd Fellow indeed, in the more familiar acceptance of the word; and especially was he so prior to being proscribed with the Others, again, have searched diligently through ancient and modern history for some basis upon which to establish the antiquity of the Order; but it must be confessed that these researches have not been attended with any very satisfactory results.

But why seek amid the crumbling columns of ancient times? Why grope by the sickly and phosphorescent light that glows from the ashes of the dead in Egyptian sepulchres for evidence of its remote origin? May we not rather claim for our noble Institution that, being free from the misty crudities and superstitions of early and darker times, it is peculiarly adapted to the spirit and genius of a more enlightened and progressive age? Let it be our boast that it bears the impress of a higher civilization, rather than the marks of great antiquity. Beyond the end of the last century there is little warrant to go for any definite and reliable history of our Order. Beyond that all is obscurity. In 1788 we find Montgomery invoking his poetic muse in a verse commencing,

"When Friendship, Love and Truth abound  
Among a band of brothers,"

for a society in London bearing our motto, and known as a Lodge of the "Ancient and Honorable Order of Odd Fellows." Early in the present century the Order was introduced into America. On the 23rd of December 1808 Shakespeare Lodge was instituted in New York. Others soon followed. But the regular organization of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, as existing at the present time, was first established in the city of Baltimore on the 26th April 1819, by Thomas Willard, John Duncan, John Welsh, John Cheatham and Richard Rushworth. Fifty-one years ago to-day was the small seedling planted in America, and known as a Lodge of the "Ancient and Honorable Order of Odd Fellows." Early in the present century the Order was introduced into America. On the 23rd of December 1808 Shakespeare Lodge was instituted in New York. Others soon followed. 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