

themselves throttled, and why, I would like to ask?

I have been in countries where such a thing as sending a person in an elevator without some efficient individual in charge, or where the machine is imperfectly equipped, is a criminal act, and is punishable without the fact of an accident occurring. Further than that, I will say that I have names and dates that customers have since been sent up in the same machine without an attendant, and that they have spoken of the danger. The bell of that elevator has been out of order for months at a time, sacrificing human life, so to speak, for the sake of the few dollars that would repair the bell and pay the wages of an elevator boy. A railroad company might just as well put a passenger in a coach, turn on the steam at the engine, and trust to luck for some one to stop the train at its destination. That is all I have to say on that subject at present, but I have my eye on another elevator run in the same way, which I may have to speak of later on.

In one of my rambles this week I was introduced to Mr. Douglas Green, of Chicago, and Tumbo Island. Mr. Green is a son-in-law of the late millionaire Snell, whose mysterious murder by Tascott created so much excitement about five years ago. The circumstance although casual, brought vividly before my mind a number of the supposed "facts" in this case, which has been so completely baffled the cleverest detectives of the United States. Whether Tascott is alive or dead no one appears to know.

By the way, there seems to be a good deal of quiet detective work done about this city. This may be accounted for by the fact that Victoria is so accessible from the Sound, and also the jumping off point of the Western Hemisphere.

I am glad to observe that amidst the excitement due to the large finds in our mining districts and the many transactions of bonding properties, there is one, the Thunder Hill mine (owned almost exclusively by business men in Victoria and Vancouver), which has never been bonded or offered for sale, but has been from the first an enterprise intended to develop the mineral wealth of the Province and East Kootenay in particular. The directors of this mine have gone about it in the right way, and to-day there is being erected on the banks of the upper Columbia Lake a 50-ton concentrating plant.

An expert from Chicago is on the spot supervising the work of erecting the plant, and I learn on good authority that the concentrating of Thunder Hill ores will be in process within the next 60 days. I understand also that this 50-ton plant is but a small beginning and that it is intended within a year to increase the concentrating works to 250 tons per day. Then will follow a smelter, and the result will be not only a handsome return to the enterprising citizens who have embarked their capital, but the employment of a large number of well paid mechanics and

workmen, and the encouragement to others to follow the example so worthily set. I am further told that this little mine has over 300,000 tons of high grade concentrating ore in sight, which is worth over \$3,000,000, and will pay a very handsome profit. I wish this and similar home enterprises every success, and hope when the owners become millionaires they will not be too proud to shake hands with

PERE GRINATOR.

THE COUNTRY STORE.

An Eastern exchange says: "The country store may be passing away in some localities, especially in the immediate vicinity of the large cities, but if so, it is being transplanted to some virgin soil. A trip through the rural districts anywhere will show the country store to be as numerous and prosperous as ever, although the city grocers are making rails on its reserves by sending out solicitors in wagons. There is evidently a mistake somewhere in the statement that the country store is passing away. What is called the country store in the east is better known as the general store in the south and west, and it can be said that there never were as many general stores as there are now. Indeed, the methods of the country trader are coming to be quite generally adopted by the city stores, and there are many localities in which trade lines cannot be sharply defined. The farmer who has to drive in a long distance does not always want to run from store to store, but prefers to make all his purchases of one merchant, thus avoiding a duplication of accounts as well as a loss of time. The country store will exist and flourish as long as farmers continue to follow the pursuits of agriculture."

PROTECTIVE DUTIES.

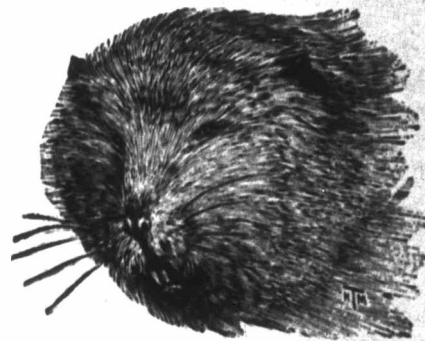
It is understood that prior to the next meeting of Parliament the Government propose to consider the principles and the interests involved in the tariff, the object being not to, in any way, increase the burdens which it imposes upon the consumers of manufactured articles, the idea being that any branch of Canadian production which cannot live under the protection now afforded is unworthy of being continued, was in fact of premature birth and is unable to live. It is, indeed, said to be the wish of the Government as a whole to reduce as far as possible the existing duties so as not to give the people reason to groan under their burdens as the people of the United States are now doing under the oppressive McKinley tariff, whose sole effect has been to make the rich richer and the poor poorer.

As concerns British Columbia, we notice that the special claims of our miners to have their tools and machinery brought in free of duty are again being advocated. This, it is claimed, would not be an injustice to any one while it would allow him the use of all his capital to develop his mines. In this instance it is urged that the taking off the duty would form just as effective a mode of protection as putting it on as in others. Against this idea it has been urged by a

newspaper correspondent that "we ought to give ourselves a chance first" and this declaration is supplemented by the remark, "I know for a fact, though in no way connected with them, that the B. C. Iron works, of Vancouver, are going in heavily for the manufacture of mining machinery. It is the slight impost of duty that will enable them to do this. They employ a great many men, and with the development of the mining country will probably employ still more. Besides others may wish to assist in that way in our development—at any rate, the chance is there, but take the duty off and this infant industry is throttled right there."

This is all very well, on the general principle, but when there is only the one concern interested, the effect might be to build up a monopoly that would do just as much to handicap mining as does the existing difficulty on account of the high duties at present imposed on the miners plant and outfit. Our true protection is for the present free trade in mining machinery, and by reason of our distant and isolated position free trade in most of the articles that we can secure is the policy that ought to apply.

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