The Colonist

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23RD, 1889.

COUNTING HEADS.

The per capita argument of the demagogues of the Opposition which Dr. Milne, now that he is on the hunt for votes in Victoria, has adopted is about the shallowest that was ever used to delude the public. One has only to enquire into the condition of some of the rural districts to see how unsound it is. A few farmers or miners have settled in a part of the country distant from any city. They are working hard to develop the resources of the country. There may be say between a half dozen and a dozen families. There are children among them, but not enough to form a large or even a good-sized school. But it will not do to let the children grow up as ignorant and uncouth as Siwashes. They must be sent to school. The Government very properly makes provision for such settlements. It builds for these scattered settlers a little school-house and does not equip it at all luxuriously. The settlers are, we shall assume, able to induce a teacher, who, perhaps, has obtained a low grade certificate by the skin of his or her teeth, to go into exile for the purpose of taking charge of this little school in the wilderness. When the school is in operation, unpretentious as it is, and modest as its curriculum must necessarily be, it is found that the pupils taught in it cost the province fifty, sixty, or even ninety dollars a head. And because it takes so large a sum per head to teach the children the rudiments of education in a poor way in this far-off settlement, Dr. Milne, having learned his lesson from his preceptor, Mayor Grant, contends that it is wrong to require the inhabitants of the cities who have the best teachers that the province can supply and whose handsome schoolhouses are equipped with everything that is needed for the comfort and the convenience of the pupils, to pay directly towards the maintenance of the superior education that has been placed within their reach. When it is considered, too, that the section of the country in which the humble district school is situated gets a very much smaller percentage of the taxes it pays, back again in the shape of educational advantages than the city, the injustice of the comparison which Dr. Milne makes appears the more glaring and the claim he sets up the more unreasonable. Every citizen of common sense sees that the condition of things is very different in the towns to what it is in the country and they are not, we are very sure, unwilling to pay directly for part of the superior advantages they enjoy.

The school buildings alone in this city are worth not less than $70,000. In all other parts of the Dominion the municipality is required to build and furnish the school-houses. The interest on this sum, at eight per cent., would amount to as much as the law requires the city to pay. Allowing the city's contribution to be $6,000, a rate of 40 cents annually, or the price of three cigars, would be sufficient to keep the schools up to their present standard.

STICKING TO IT.

The remarks made by our esteemed correspondent "Elector" yesterday were appropriate and timely. It does seem singular to see Dr. Milne keeping in his card a statement which he has admitted to be false. It looks as if he wished to benefit by the glaring misrepresentation of the law which he has carelessly, and, we must add, stupidly made. A candidate who wished to deal fairly with the electors would have withdrawn the statement as soon as he was convinced it was false. But Dr. Milne has allowed what he knows to be a very gross misrepresentation to appear over his signature for many days. Would a man of a nice sense of honor and a strict regard for truth do this? Had any such representation appeared in Mr. Davie's card, the public would never have heard the last of it. He would be accused of uttering an "infamous lie," of telling "a barefaced untruth" and of "straight lying." The electors would be asked if they could trust a man who had the audacity to perpetrate a flagrant violation of the truth in his election card, and to continue the offence after the untruthfulness of his statement had been pointed out and admitted. We have dealt much more leniently with Dr. Milne, but he does not seem at all disposed to retract the untruthful statement in a way that is at once the most obvious and the most effective.

THE PROPER COURSE.

Alderman Harrison's suggestion to the Council on Wednesday evening was worthy of more attention than it received. The bye-law to pay $20,000 a year interest on the bonds of the Victoria, Saanich and New Westminster Railway Company for twenty-five years passed by a nominal majority of three only. It is well known that it obtained even that small majority by a fluke. If the electors had voted as they intended to vote the majority against it would have been as great as against the Stock bye-law. A very little inquiry would have convinced the aldermen that although they had a legal right to confirm that by-law they had no moral right—because it is the law of the minority of the ratepayers and not of the majority. Under these circumstances the Aldermen would have been doing their duty—protecting the rights of both the numerical majority and the owners of by far the greater part of the property within the city's limits—if they did as Alderman Harrison advised, and recorded a solid vote against the bye-law and quashed it.

There is a kind of law honesty which is not honesty at all, and in the same way there is an apparent respect for what is declared to be the wishes of the majority which is really contempt for the wishes of the true majority as well as a glaring disregard of their most valued interests.

If any alderman on the Board is not convinced that a majority of the ratepayers intended to vote against both bye-laws and believed that they had done so it is his own fault. Such is now known to be the case. The alderman knowing this, who, out of a pretended respect for the will of the majority of the ratepayers, voted to confirm a law which he was morally certain did not obtain the consent of the majority actually voting, cannot be said to have done his duty. It was known before Wednesday evening that mistakes had been made by voters whose integrity is beyond dispute. The ballots showed that the mistakes had been committed. It was in the power of the Board of Aldermen to rectify the mistake of the electors, and we contend that it was their duty to have instituted an enquiry with the object of finding out whether a majority had really voted for the by-law, and if at its conclusion, they were convinced that a majority of the electors had believed that they had voted against both the bye-laws they should have done as Aldermen Harrison suggested, voted solidly against the law and given effect to the decision virtually arrived at by the majority of the ratepayers. Placing such a heavy liability on the ratepayers is a very serious matter, and there should be no doubt as to whether the by-law had the consent of the majority of the rate-payers who had polled their votes.

THE ORGAN'S ECHO.

In the school of misrepresentation Dr. Milne has proved himself to be an apt scholar. He evidently has not taken the slightest trouble to enquire for himself, but repeats, parrot-like, the slanders and misstatements of the organ of the Opposition. That sheet raised the cry that the Government had by its amendments to the School Act converted it into a "political machine." Dr. Milne repeats the stupid falsehood in his card. He says: "As the School Act now stands it is in many respects merely a political machine." He evidently does not possess originality enough to give a spice of variety to the stereotyped slanders of the Times. He says "that Mr. Robson had passed a clause giving himself power to summarily suspend a teacher, thus abrogating the duties of trustees." This is not only not true, but the reverse of true. Mr. Robson, or rather the Legislature, has taken no power from the trustees. They possess the sole power of employing and dismissing teachers. The Provincial Secretary has not taken from them any power in this respect that they possessed previous to the passage of the late amendments.

Dr. Milne did not quote the law in proof of the position which he took. It is more than probable that he never read the law. The legal opinion of a man who takes a parliamentary bill for statute law is, we confess, not worth much; but Dr. Milne should have quoted the passage or passages of the school law by which, in his opinion, power is taken from the trustees and given to the Government. There are no such passages. The report that new powers had been taken by the Government was caused by the ignorance of the law of some wiseacre who undertook to write for the Opposition newspaper. If Dr. Milne had been prudent enough to examine the school law for himself he would have been greatly puzzled to see any difference between the original law and the law as amended with respect to the power of the Superintendent of Education and the Governor in Council of suspending teachers and cancelling his certificate. We will place the law of 1879, when Dr. Milne's party was in power, by the side of the amendment of last session, and we defy Dr. Milne or anyone else to show that the amendment takes any power from the trustees that they before possessed, or gives the Government any greater power over the the teacher than it could exercise under the old law. The change that has been made is a technical one, and can only be appreciated by a professional man. The following are the sections placed side by side, and we recommend Dr. Milne to study them carefully. If he does so he will find that there is not even the shadow of a foundation for the accusations he so recklessly preferred against the Provincial Secretary and the Government of which that gentleman is now the leader.

Public School Act, 1879, (Sec. 7. Sub-Sec. 9).—Duties of Superintendent.	*Amendment School Act, 1889.—Duties of Superintendent.*
"(9.) To suspend the certificate of qualification of any Teacher until the Lieutenant-Governor in Council shall confirm or disallow his action in suspending such Teacher; and the cancellation or suspension of a Teacher's Certificate, when confirmed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, shall release the School Trustees of the District in which such Teacher may be employed from any obligation to continue to employ him as such Teacher;"	"(9.) With the sanction of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, for cause to summarily suspend from teaching any teacher, and to cancel for cause the certificate of qualification of any teacher until the Lieutenant-Governor in Council shall confirm or disallow his action in suspending such teacher; and the cancellation or suspension of a teacher's certificate, when confirmed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, shall release the school trustees of the district in which such teacher may be employed from any obligation to continue to employ him as such teacher."

The powers of the Superintendent are, as far as we can see, the same in both acts. The power of the Governor in Council is not greater in one than in the other, and the one interferes as much or as little with the power of the Trustees as the other. The amendment is, in the wording, at any rate, less arbitrary than the old law, for it requires the Superintendent to show cause why he exercises his authority. There is no such obligation under the old law.

But any one can see that such a trifling change in the wording of one of its sections cannot convert the School Act into a "political machine." But Dr. Milne declares that it does. He must now see that by placing blind faith in the unscrupulous utterances of a partisan organ he has been led to accuse the Government falsely and to stultify himself. For no man of common intelligence who reads the two clauses carefully will say that the amendment gives the Government any more power over the teacher than they possessed under the old act, and he cannot but see that it leaves the powers of the trustees exactly where they were before the amendment was made.

The truth is that Dr. Milne has made worse than a muddle of his education grievance. He has shown an ignorance of the law which, considering the position he occupied as City School Trustee, is almost incredible; he has publicly and admittedly stated what was utterly false; he has misrepresented circumstances and acts in which he was personally engaged; and he has repeated the untruthful and baseless accusations of the Opposition press without apparently making a single effort to see whether they were well grounded or not; in a word he has taken up a bad cause and he has advocated it without regard to either truth or principle.

DR. MILNE'S TANGLED WEB.

In order to support the principal plank of his very narrow political platform, Dr. Milne has involved himself in a labyrinth of deceptions and misrepresentations. In the first place, he stated in his card what was manifestly untrue. He ventured an assertion which it is incomprehensible that any man who had been even remotely connected with the management of the city schools could have honestly made. Dr. Milne was, when the School Act was amended, a trustee of the city schools. He had heard the change discussed at the Board of Trustees, of which he was a member, and he had taken part in the discussions. He read the controversy regarding it which appeared in the newspapers, and he no doubt talked about it on the street and elsewhere. Yet when he came to write his election card he grossly misrepresents the amendment to the school law, which had been the subject of so many disputes in so many places. And what is worse and more inexcusable, if possible, he permits the false statement which he has so strangely made to remain in his card to the electors over his own signature after he has been compelled to admit its untruthfulness! The statement: "The amendment of our Public School Act of 1888, where it provides that the cities are called upon to pay the expenses of operating these schools . . . is, I consider, a law unfair and unjust," is untrue from the first word to the last. Yet (in the elegant language of Mayor Grant) this "bare-faced lie," with the endorsement of G. L. Milne, stares every reader of The Standard, The Times and THE COLONIST every day in the face!

In order to show that he had no official connection with the amendment of the law which he now condemns, Dr. Milne, to use the very mildest terms which can be found in the dictionary, is most disingenuous. He said in his speech of Tuesday evening last that levying a tax for school purposes and requiring the city to pay a third of the teachers' salaries is the same in principle. We will quote his own words. When excusing himself for the unaccountable mistake of having quoted the bill as submitted to the Legislature, instead of the Act as it is on the statute book, the Times reports him as saying that,—"He was not aware at the time of writing his address that the clause had subsequently been modified, and that it now read one-third of the salaries, "expenses" being eliminated. The principle of the Act, however, was the same." But the suggestion of levying a school tax on the municipality to supplement the Government appropriation came from the City Trustees. In weaving his tangled web of deception, Dr. Milne tries to deny this, but the very quotation he makes to prove his denial shows that he undertook to deny what was demonstrably true. He tries to make the audience believe that Mr. Robson suggested that a tax be levied on the municipality, and to prove it quotes the report of the committee which waited upon Mr. Robson, which says: "YOUR COMMITTEE ALSO SUGGESTED TO THE HON. THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION the advisability of placing the appropriations for city schools to the credit of the respective school boards in towns and cities, AND TO SO AMEND THE SCHOOL ACT AS TO ENABLE THEM TO SUPPLEMENT THE AMOUNT BY LEVYING A SCHOOL TAX ON THE MUNICIPALITY." Dr. Milne says that Mr. Robson suggested to the Committee of the Board of Trustees that the Government be empowered to levy a tax on the municipality; but the committee themselves say that THEY made the suggestion to Mr. Robson. Who tells the truth, the committee who know what they did and who solemnly say in an official document that the suggestion came from them, or Dr. Milne who was not present but who virtually accuses the committee of stating what is false? The committee, of course, told the truth in their report which they submitted to the full Board of Trustees of which Dr. Milne was a member.

And now we come to the reason why Dr. Milne was so desirous to lead his hearers to believe that Mr. Robson had taken the initiative in this business of requiring the cities to contribute to the maintenance of their schools. The report was submitted by the committee which drew up their recommendations to the full Board of Trustees, of which Dr. Milne, not then a candidate for the votes of the electors of Victoria, was a member. The report was discussed by the trustees; Dr. Milne took part in the discussion. He objected to some of the recommendations of the committee, but against the suggestion to levy a tax on the municipality he had nothing to say. He did not raise his voice against it, as he does now. He was evidently quite willing that the cities should be taxed for the purpose of supplementing the school fund.

Here we have Dr. Milne contradicted by his own witness. He says that the tax suggestion came from Mr. Robson. The Committee of Trustees, whose report he quotes, state in the plainest terms possible that the suggestion came from them. In order that our readers may see exactly how the matter stands, and how much dependence is to be placed on Dr. Milne's most positive statements, we append the report of the committee, which is a true copy, with the reporter's note of the objections made to the recommendations it contained:

To the Chairman and Members of Victoria City School Board:

GENTLEMEN—Your committee appointed to interview the Hon. the Minister of Education, in regard to sundry improvements and other suggestions required at the schools of this city, beg leave to report as follows:

1. We impressed upon the Hon. Mr. Robson the advisability of a different system of heating to that now used, and suggested hot water heating. Mr. Robson seemed to think it would be much more expensive than we thought at $700, but said he would lay it before the Executive and see what could be done.

2. We suggested the building of an addition to Miss Armstrong's building to receive the smaller classes of girls, so that the girls would all be in one building. This building, which would be erected between the high school and Miss Armstrong's building, would necessitate the removal of the present outhouses, which would be removed north and south, and thus effect the sanitary arrangement so often desired, but never carried out.

(2a.) We suggested the making of a large hall in the central building, upstairs, by the removal of the partition of Messrs. Kaye and Doran's rooms.

3. We suggested the housing of the janitor in the new building about to be erected.

4. We also advocated the equalization of salaries between the male and female teachers, and Mr. Robson, to a certain extent, coincided with the idea.

5. Your committee also suggested to the Honorable the Minister of Education the advisability of placing the appropriations for city schools to the credit of the respective school boards in towns and cities, and to so amend the school act as to enable them to supplement the amount by levying a school tax on the municipality. Our suggestion was warmly endorsed by Mr. Robson, and he requested that this board should formulate their desires in such a way as to enable him to understand fully the object arrived at, and promised that it should have his most careful attention.

6. Your committee would suggest that a memorial be drawn up embodying the views of the board on this subject, and handed to the Honorable the Minister of Education at the earliest possible opportunity.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

H. F. HEISTERMAN, JNO. B. FERGUSON, } Committee.

The report, after some discussion, was taken up, clause by clause. Clauses 2, 3 and 4 were objected to by Trustee Milne.

THE TWO CANDIDATES.

The candidates for public favor are like the two boys in the Danish volume, who were named "Eyes and No Eyes." They went out for a walk, in which one saw nothing worthy of record, and the other saw a good deal both to amuse and interest him. When they returned home Eyes never tired of telling about the useful and pleasant things he had seen on his journey, but No Eyes grumbled and said the world was a hollow sham and that he knew more about it before he took the walk than he did afterwards. The story goes on to tell how Eyes profited greatly by his newly acquired knowledge, while No Eyes remained steeped in his ignorance. Having heard the addresses of both candidates it may be fairly claimed that the Eyes of the present campaign is Mr. Davie, while the grumbler who can see no good in either the country or the Government thereof is Dr. Milne.

For several years, ever since the present Government came into power, this constituency has been periodically treated to dismal jeremiads on the ruin which it was said would certainly fall like a blight on the land if a speedy change of policy was not brought about. The public will not have forgotten how at the last general election they were told that unless Mr. Beaven and his party were allowed to regain the treasury benches the credit of the province would be smashed, public works would be at a standstill, the population would dwindle and general bankruptcy would ensue. Mr. Beaven and his party did not win the confidence of the public, and we search in vain for evidences of a blasted credit, a depleted exchequer, neglected public works, and an attentuated population. On the contrary, Mr. Davie, who would seem to have used his eyes to some purpose, told his hearers the other evening that the most substantial evidences of prosperity are manifest on all sides. Both public and private works are being pushed with unprecedented vigor; the increase of revenue was so marked that a surplus is confidently anticipated at the close of the current year. Provincial bonds are at a premium, and the population of city and country is increasing with a rapidly increasing flow. Mr. Davie might have gone a great deal further. He might have pointed to the remarkable growth of the population of Victoria and vicinity; to the leap in the assessed value of city real property from $5,000,000 to $10,000,000; to the fact reported by the assessors that but nine habitable dwellings within the city limits are vacant—and he might have claimed that these good results have flowed from an enlightened and energetic provincial government policy.

The Opposition on reading these lines will rise in their wrath to declaim against credit being given to the Government for the improved state of affairs. If asked to explain to what cause they attribute the change they will probably reply, "climate." But there was a "climate" when Mr. Beaven was in power; and still the country did not get on. It was Topsey who told Aunt Ophelia that she "wasn't borned—she just growed." The Opposition would have people believe that the growth of British Columbia is due to any cause save that of good government. Prosperity just came, and that's all there is to be said. But how will they explain away their direful prognostications of three years ago, or, later still, when Mr. Duck was returned by a tremendous majority over his opponent? The Opposition prophets then went through the streets crying "Ichabod!" But despite their wailings and croakings the country has prospered and is prospering. The remotest corner is feeling the benefits of a good Administration of public affairs. Men's pulses throb as with a new life. On all sides the sounds of trowel and hammer are heard, and lofty buildings are taking the places of antiquated shanties; desert places have begun to blossom, and forests are disappearing to make way for towns and cities.

Dr. Milne has obstinately refused to look about him. He has "No Eyes" for the improvement visible in every branch of business and walk of life. There are none so blind as those who will not see; and then, perversely enough, try to comfort themselves with another old saying, "What the eye sees not, the heart doesn't crave." As an opositionist he has learned his lesson well; but as a political economist it is to be feared he is a failure. We pass over for the present his error in attributing to the Government a school policy which he himself recommended and approved; and another and more serious error in misquoting an Act of Parliament. This constituency, which has a keen regard for "the laws of truth, the laws of justice and the laws of fair play" will mete out to Dr. Milne the punishment they have inflicted on other candidates who were guilty of misrepresentation and were caught, as Dr. Milne was caught, in the very act. If Dr. Milne was a fair-minded man he would give the Government credit for at least a small measure of success. But, like the man in the fable, he has swallowed the east wind, and it does not sit easily on his stomach. Among the many who have prospered through the changed condition of affairs is the Opposition candidate. No man has derived larger profits from the improved state of the real estate market than Dr. Milne. When the Government came into power he was comparatively a poor man, and now that he has grown rich, as a result of the Government policy, he would fain deny his obligations to that government. It is no new thing to hear of men casting off the ladder by which they climbed to riches and preferment. Scripture tells us that "Jehosephat waxed fat and kicked." Dr. Milne's attack on the Government is new evidence that history repeats itself.

A philosopher is said to have extracted sunbeams from cucumbers. If Dr. Milne would use his organs of vision as Mr. Davie uses his he too would see that the sun is shining brightly on the country; that at no period in its history has prosperity been as widely diffused as now; that happiness and contentment are manifest on every side, and that the province is moving on to greatness with space-devouring strides. If the reverse were the case, if it could be shown that the country is running down in place of going up, and that public confidence no longer reposed in the Government, we should be among the first to demand a change. But under existing circumstances, and with the new cabinet committed to the construction of a second transcontinental railway, with its terminus at Victoria or Esquimalt, we join with the Premier in saying that it would be worse than foolish—it would be suicidal—for Victoria to refuse to return Mr. Davie on Wednesday next. Happily, such a calamity is not among the possibilities, and Victoria will be true to itself.

SATURDAY NIGHT'S MEETING

Mr. Beaven last night forfeited any claim he might have had to be considered an honorable opponent and a fair controversialist. The opportunity was afforded the Opposition to make the meeting a joint one. They were formally asked, through Dr. Milne, to be present, and to make arrangements with respect to speaking, etc., and Dr. Milne, in a very churlish way, for himself and his party, declined the invitation. Having thus refused to take part in Mr. Davie's meeting they should have been particularly careful to offer no obstruction to the proceedings after the meeting had been differently arranged. Common decency, to say nothing of gentlemanly courtesy, required this. But Mr. Davie's vigorous and forcible speech had such an effect on Mr. Beaven that he broke through all restraints. He saw that Mr. Davie by his frankness and his carefulness to prove every statement he made was producing a good impression, and he determined, if possible, to create a diversion in favor of his party. He therefore, although his candidate had refused to meet Mr. Davie, interrupted the meeting and through Mr. Davie's indulgence, gained an audience, Mr. Davie generously conceding him the privilege of speaking. The speech was a weak, an exceedingly weak one, certainly, but it was the best Mr. Beaven could make. It would have been more effective if he could have made it so. Better things were to be expected of Mr. Beaven. He, at any rate, professes to be a gentleman and to be guided by the principles by which gentlemen regulate their conduct. As for the interruptions of Messrs. Grant, Alex. Wilson and Fell, nothing better could be expected of them. It was not their fault that the meeting had not been from the first transformed into a bear garden. If their example had been generally followed the speakers would not have been heard and the meeting would have been thrown into confusion. But, thanks to the good sense of the electors generally, all the speakers were accorded a fair hearing, and the meeting was beyond a doubt a complete triumph for the Government party and their candidate. The interruptions of Mr. Beaven and his henchmen only served to show the weakness of their cause and the unscrupulousness of their tactics.

DR. MILNE'S IDEA OF THE "LAWS OF TRUTH, THE LAWS OF JUSTICE, AND THE LAWS OF FAIR PLAY."

In the course of his recent address to the electors at the Victoria theatre Dr. Milne, Opposition candidate for the Local House, said:

"He was in the habit of telling the truth in private life, and he was going to do the same in public. (Applause.) The original act introduced by Mr. Robson, he had received at the time as a trustee. It read that one-third of the 'expenses' of the schools were to be paid by the cities, in addition to one-third of the salaries of teachers. He was not aware, at the time of writing his address, that the clause had subsequently been modified, and that it now read one-third of the salaries, 'expenses' being eliminated."

At the conclusion of his remarks he said:

"Sin is a reproach to any people. He believed we should do nothing in private we should be ashamed to divulge in public, nor should we do anything in public or political life we should be ashamed to make known in private. The laws of truth, the laws of justice, the laws of fair play, should exist in the sphere of politics as in any other. It is only by adopting these principles, by practicing them ourselves, and enforcing them upon those who are around us, that we can raise politics to a higher level."

To give the reader an idea of what he considers "telling the truth in public," and what his opinion is of "the laws of truth, the laws of justice, and the laws of fair play" it is only necessary to point to Doctor Milne's address in another column. In that address the false statement which Mr. Davie exposed and Dr. Milne confessed, remains unaltered. No order has been received to change the wording in any respect and the address continues to circulate a falsehood over the Doctor's signature. We are ever suspicious of politicians who constantly prate of their virtues and truthfulness. But Dr. Milne is the first aspirant for office who, after a humiliating exposure and confession, has been caught in an effort to perpetuate his error.

John Joslyn, a prominent lumber merchant of Broadview, Man., was killed there yesterday, being caught on the track by a C. P. R. engine.

A FIRE-EATER.

The Arganout of San Francisco, which looks like a respectable newspaper, concludes an article on "The trouble with Canada over Behring's Sea" with the following very peculiar passage:

"Congress passed a law declaring that Behring's Sea was a 'mare clausum' and that the pursuit of seals in the open on their way to their rookeries was not admissable. This is a law of the Congress of the United States, it was almost the last act of President Cleveland, and it is now being enforced by a Republican administration. It will be approved by the English Government, and it ought to be, and if the Dominion government or the owners of the sealing pirates do not like it, we think they had better pause than precipitate the nations into war; for though the English navy might bombard our coasts, invade our ports, destroy our cities, increase our national debt, and strain England's credit, the armies of the United States WOULD WIPE OUT EVERYTHING HUMAN OR SIMILARLE WHICH EXISTS IN THE DOMINION OF CANADA FROM BAFFIN'S BAY TO BEHRING'S SEA."

This is an awful threat. If the Dominion does not quietly admit the claim of the United States its citizens are prepared to disregard the teachings of the Christian civilization of nearly two thousand years and make a howling desert of all the northern part of the continent. This newspaper Atilla of the Pacific state intends to make Canadians, particularly British Columbians, tremble. His threats are perfectly awful. He evidently wishes us to believe that he means what he says, and that he voices the public opinion of the Republic of the United States. And there may be, we are prepared to admit, some grounds for his pretension, for he is not regarded by his fellow-citizens as a vaporing fool, whose mouthings should be treated by men having the slightest claim to the possession of common sense with supreme contempt. It is not creditable to the intelligence of our neighbors that there should be a public among them for writers of this class.

FALLEN, FALLEN.

General Boulanger's star seems to be no longer in the ascendent. Since his flight from Paris the people who while he was with them almost adored him appear to have nearly forgotten that he ever existed. The cantonal elections showed in a very striking way how far he had fallen in the popular estimation. The test which he himself chose to prove his popularity showed in the clearest manner that he had become unpopular. Since his defeat at the polls he has been tried by the Senate though not in the country and found guilty. General Boulanger was accused of many offences, some of them very serious. He was accused to taking bribes. Some enterprising speculator had "coffee tablets" which he desired to be accepted by the military authorities. Boulanger is accused of taking a bribe of over $40,000 to give the tablets a trial in the army. Then he was mixed up in some way with the contract to supply the army with epaulettes. He received a commission of twenty centimes on every pair sold. He is also accused of drawing on the secret service fund for his own personal benefit to the extent of about fifty thousand dollars. These were sordid offences, not at all in keeping with the character he had assumed of hero and patriot. And when it was found that there were good reasons to believe that he had committed them, it is no wonder that he ceased to be the idol of the masses. A man who conspires with contractors to fleece the Government can hardly be regarded as a self-sacrificing patriot or single-minded hero.

Then it was shown that Boulanger was guilty of serious offences in order to increase his influence and to keep up his popularity. He intrigued against the Government he served. He plotted with the royalists, while at the same time he was hand-in-glove with the anarchists. He coquetted with the Bonapartists. In fact, he strove to ingratiate himself with the opponents of the Government and of the Republic no matter what principles they professed. It was a case of diamond cut diamond between each of the factions and Boulanger. He wanted them to serve his purpose, and they expected to use him to carry out their designs. Whether his political scheming really amounted to treason is doubted by impartial persons who are in a position to judge; but it seems that there were strong grounds for the charge of malversation of the public money. No offence could be better calculated to lower him in the estimation of the people than this. Had he been found guilty of a purely political offence he might still be a hero in their eyes—a man who risked everything for the sake of giving his country a better government. But it is hard to idolize a man who is known to have an itching palm, and who sells his influence to army contractors and others. It is therefore no wonder that Boulanger's star has grown dim, and that the people of France show no desire to place him in the position he occupied in their esteem previous to his flight from Paris. There is now good reason to believe that what his enemies said was true, namely, that it was a consciousness of guilt that caused him to run away.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS.

IT was most presumptuous as well as supremely foolish for Mr. Beaven to arrogate to himself the power of searching hearts. After the leader of the Government had asserted clearly and distinctly that it was the policy of his government by all possible means to further the construction of the Canadian Western Railway, it was a great deal worse than impertinence for Mr. Beaven to declare that Mr. Robson in his heart was opposed to the construction of the Canadian Western. Mr. Beaven ought to know, and does know, that when a leader of a Government states his policy in plain terms, no one but a fool or an ignorant boor would require of him any further pledge. As to what is in Mr. Robson's or Mr. Beaven's heart that is beyond human ken. Ordinary mortals, who do not profess to be omniscient, must be content to take men at their word and to judge them by their acts. There is One only who reads the hearts and knows the intents of men.

MANY often wonder whether the temperance movement has had any perceptible effect on the quantity of strong drink used by the people of Great Britain and her dependencies. Some figures, compiled by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, leads to the conclusion that the quantity of intoxicating beverages consumed in the United Kingdom is now pretty nearly the same as it was thirty-two years ago. The population of Great Britain in 1856 was, in round numbers, 27,000,000; in 1888 it was 38,000,000. In 1856 the per capita consumption of beer was 22.6 gallons; in 1873 it had increased to 34.1, but in 1888 it had gone down to 26.8 gallons per head. In the consumption of beer there has been an increase in the thirty-two years of about 19 per cent. With regards to spirits and wine the result is different. The consumption of spirits and wine in 1856 was 35,000,000. This is as near as, may be, 1.3 gallons per head of the population. In 1888 the consumption was 48,500,000 or 1.29 gallons per head, a very slight decrease indeed. These figures are not very encouraging to the advocates of temperance. But while statistics show that the quantity of strong drink used is not less than it used to be, the sentiment in favor of temperance is far stronger in most places than it was thirty-two years ago. Then it was no reproach for a man to get drunk, and sobriety was not considered a very great virtue. Now even the drunkard is ashamed of his failing, and the sober man in every walk of life is looked upon as an exemplary character.

METHOD OF TAXATION.

TO THE EDITOR:—In view of the increased assessment on real estate for taxing purposes, now in progress, it may interest others as well as the writer to enquire into the methods adopted for raising revenue — provincial and municipal. For example, a member of a local building society secures an appropriation of $2,000 and invests it in a house and lot, presumably a home for himself and family. The property is registered in his name, and the society takes a mortgage on it for the amount loaned (no interest being charged as the society is co-operative, each member in turn receiving the same assistance at the same cost). At this stage the board of assessors value the property, and on such value the rates, taxes, etc., are levied and paid.

Now comes the provincial government assessor and collector with a tax on mortgages of ½ of 1 per cent., for which the society, who advanced the money, are held responsible. They having no fund available for this purpose are compelled to charge it to the owner of the property, who is thus made to pay two taxes on the same property, while his wealthier neighbor enjoys equal privileges on payment of but one tax.

Now, sir, if this is not taxing a man for being poor, will some one kindly explain. The matter becomes important when we find that nearly 1,500 shares in these societies are held in Victoria; 500 in Westminster and 500 in Nanaimo, each share entitled to $1,000; a total of $2,500,000, upon which the provincial government levy a tax of ½ of 1 per cent., inferentially because the owners are poorer than their neighbors. This must be correct, as the rules of these societies provide for the annual repayment of 10 per cent. of the sum borrowed. In ten years therefore the mortgage is cancelled and payment of this poverty tax ceases. If some of our provincial law-makers would focus their intellect on this question and give us the result through the columns of your esteemed journal, they would confer a favor which would doubtless be remembered at the next election.

HARMONY HALL.

THE PEACE RIVER.

TO THE EDITOR:—As there seems to be a dispute regarding the climate of this district for agricultural purposes, may I ask you if the Government has any reliable parties, by whom this question can be settled? When I read Mr. Davis' letter, I was very much struck with the different account that he has given when he said that "wheat would not grow even as low down as Edmonton," to the north of Alberta; and those letters written by old settlers and a clergyman and published in a pamphlet by the Dominion Government for the benefit of us emigrants. They all state that it is a nice climate, and wheat, oats and roots of all kinds grow well. The winter is not severe, nor long, but the spring is not earlier than in Manitoba.

As I am thinking of going up to Edmonton to take up some land for a dairy and mixed farm, I should like, if you will publish this letter, to know a little more of the climate of this part of Alberta, should there be a party in Victoria who could give me this information.

If the Peace River district is such a deplorable place as Mr. Davis says, I should imagine the authorities would never think of running a railroad through it; but they must have better information than I have.

C. J. JESSOP.

Victoria, August 14, 1889.

MUNICIPAL BALLOT PAPERS.

TO THE EDITOR:—We hear dissatisfaction expressed at the new form of ballot paper in municipal voting, and of objections entertained at the voter having to place his ballot paper in the hands of the deputy for the countertoil to be torn off.

When a voter gets his ballot paper he regards it in the meantime as his exclusive property, nor for it to go out of his hands until he has placed it in the ballot box. That was the practice in good old British Columbian times, and is still the practice in voting for members of the legislature.

This new-fangled system, with its complications, seems as if intended to annoy the voter and to give unpleasant duty to the officers.

It has already cost some annoyance, and in the election for mayor and aldermen its objectional features, and the additional time taken up, when despatch is so necessary, will be more distinctly shown.

The sooner it is altered the better.

A MUNICIPAL VOTER.

A NEW RAILROAD.

To be Built from Portland to Seattle—$5,000,000 Capital.

PORTLAND, Aug. 15.—Articles of incorporation were filed here to-dy by Chester W. Collins, John D. Kilpatrick, W. H. Kilpatrick, John H. Smith, E.J. Johnson, Lee Hoffman and Emil Adler, incorporating the Portland & Puget Sound Railroad Company. The capital stock is fixed at $5,000,000, divided into 50,000 shares.

The object of the corporation is to construct and equip a railroad and telegraph line from Portland to Seattle, with several branch lines. The duration of the corporation is unlimited. One of the branches is to extend to Gray's harbor and the other to Port Townsend.

The company is also empowered to purchase, lease and operate and maintain railroad branches and telegraph lines; also to purchase real estate, to build docks, piers, hotels and warehouses, etc., and to borrow money and issue bonds.

It is claimed that the company propose to proceed to active operations without delay.

Children Cry for Pitcher's Castoria

AN OPPOSITIONIST'S REASON FOR VOTING FOR DAVIE.

TO THE EDITOR:—I want to say a word or two on the political situation. We have before us two gentlemen—Dr. Milne and Mr. Davie. I know naught but good of either; so personally, with me at least, they stand on the same level. Their relative political importance is, therefore, what I have to do with now. At the last bye-election for the city some supported Mr. Williams against Mr. Duck, because Mr. Duck was not a minister and because they then belonged, and still belong, to the party known in this province as Liberals. Furthermore, no great issue was presented at that time. The Opposition were beaten very badly, much to my disappointment.

The contest now on the cards is entirely different. In Mr. Davie we have a cabinet minister, and he raises a distinct issue of vast and far-reaching importance to this place and island. In Dr. Milne we have a respectable citizen of good ability as a physician, but with not the slightest experience as a politician. His address shows that. Moreover, he has no policy except to condemn the government for doing something that he himself asked them to do, and a threat to change the school system if he should get in. As far as the doctor is concerned in the contest, he seems to be little better than a puppet. He has been thrust forward to test the strength of the Outs. It is by no one pretended that he can do any good if he should be returned. If Mr. Davie is defeated he could easily get another district to represent, and Victoria would be placed in the unenviable position of having declined to elect a minister, and of having refused to endorse the government policy for the construction of the Canada Western railway. In this crisis I have asked myself how I should vote. If I cast for Milne and he be elected, it will be for only one term, and no possible difference could be made to the government which is strong enough to lose five seats and still rule. Serious injury might result to Island interests, which would be sure to suffer from the weakness of the Opposition and the strength of the Government.

Of the two candidates, therefore, I have decided to cast for Mr. Davie, for the good and sufficient reason that he is in a position to do us good by advancing our interests where they stand in need of advancement. I shall therefore record my vote for DAVIE AND THE CANADA WESTERN RAILWAY.

VERITAS.

P. S.—I have read your article in today's issue about Dr. Milne's address. I endorse every word of it. I heard the doctor say at the theatre that he had made a mistake. Then why, I ask, does he not remove the mistake from his card? V.

DR. MILNE'S UNTRUTHFUL CARD SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN.

TO THE EDITOR:—The conduct of Dr. Milne in not withdrawing his address from publication is the subject of universal disapproval. Every one with whom I have conversed is of the opinion that the Doctor's avowal of error at the public meeting should have been followed by the withdrawal of the document in which the error occurred. People are beginning to ask themselves, in the light of what has since transpired, Was it an unwitting error? Was it not, rather, a wilful mis-statement? But, however it may have originated, persistence in its publication makes the opposition candidate responsible for it. What are the doctor's advisers thinking of when they permit so shameful a violation of the truth to appear day after day without remonstrance?

An idle word or a slip of the tongue is readily condoned by explanation and apology, but a printed perversion of truth, after its falsity has been pointed out and acknowledged, cannot be continued without greatly damaging the offender's cause.

I call on Dr. Milne, who has publicly stated that he prizes truth before a successful canvass, to withdraw his address at once.

As an honest man he cannot permit it to appear again without seriously damaging his reputation and the cause he professes to have at heart.

I join with "Elector" in this demand.

ANOTHER ELECTOR.

MR. DOWIE'S LECTURE.

TO THE EDITOR:—Having heard last night our very excellent friend Mr. Dowie in his explanation of that passage—"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth," endeavoring as he did to show that the chastening could not possibly be bodily suffering, I would like to ask a question or two which may lead to the belief that it may as likely mean physical chastening as any other. If not physical chastening, what chastening is meant? If I mistake not, Mr. Dowie declares it to be spiritual discipline, but I conclude that if he pooh-pooh so vehemently the idea that a loving God will inflict bodily chastening on his creatures, I may just as well pooh-pooh the idea that the Father of Spirits will inflict chastening on those spirits he has himself created. But Mr. Dowie will say: "It is God's will, since He loves the body, that it should grow up strong and beautiful and free from pain." I reply that much more will God's love to the spirit prompt that it be not weakened or deformed by chastening or pain. But Mr. Dowie may say: "Ah, yes, but chastening will purify and improve the spirit." I reply by enquiring on what authority he may decide it may not purify and finally improve the body.

But perhaps Mr. Dowie may say that the chastening was of some other kind. I reply, it still remains chastening, and if Mr. Dowie grants, as he must, that God does chasten, he