

and ascends the Selkirk slope. The Columbia River continues its northerly course for some eighty miles farther, and, at what is known as the "Big Bend," makes a bold sweep round the northern extremity of the Selkirks, then flowing almost due south through Oregon Territory into the Pacific Ocean. The Selkirks form, as it were, a long spit of land some two hundred and fifty miles in length and fifty to seventy in width, having the Columbia River on either side, and enclosing their northern end. The geological system to which they belong is the lower carboniferous, in which the dark slates with quartz veins interlaminated are a notable feature.

The rich mineral belt of which we have spoken is crossed by the line of railway a little to the west of the summit of the Selkirks. This belt is a prolongation of the gold and silver range that runs up northwards through Texas, Colorado and Montana. It enters Canadian territory between the 115th and 117th degrees of longitude, passes up by the Kootenay Lakes, traverses the whole length of the Selkirk Range, crosses the Columbia River near the Big Bend, and continues on northwards by the valley of Canoe River to the Cariboo Mountains and Peace River district beyond. Its general bearing is north-west, and it is said to be about forty miles in width by some five hundred miles in length in Canadian territory. All old miners have unbounded faith in the existence of this streak of mineral wealth, and their faith has been rewarded in some instances by unusually rich finds. It is a matter of direct observation with them that all the streams flowing out of this belt are more or less gold-bearing; that off it any indications of rich minerals are invariably misleading. In the Cariboo Mountains, in 1862, enormously rich placer mines were worked. It was no unusual thing to take out from two hundred and fifty to three hundred ounces of gold *per diem* from one claim, this immense yield being continued for some weeks. Gold is still found there in the creek beds in paying quantities; but the work is not so profitable as formerly, owing to the great depth of gravel that has now to be dug through to reach the bed rock where the gold lies. In 1866, on McCullough Creek and Gold Creek, near the Big Bend of the Columbia, large quantities of gold were found; but, in consequence of the great difficulty and expense of getting in supplies over rough mountain trails, the diggings were abandoned. Flour cost \$1.50 per pound, candles \$1 each, nails \$5 per pound, and so on; and, even at these prices, it was impossible to supply the wants of the community, and starvation forced the miners to leave. A few broken-down log-houses, and some surrounding the decaying remnants of billiard tables, mark the site of the former mining town, and suggest, amid the weird silence of the forest, the scenes of boisterous revelry incident to a miner's camp.

At the time these diggings were worked, all that could be done was to wash out and secure the loose gold lying in the creek bottoms. Though these deposits were a sure indication of gold-bearing quartz veins existing somewhere higher up in the mountains, it was useless at that time to search for or find them. The means of communication were such that, if found, it would be impossible either to bring in the heavy machinery necessary to crush the quartz, or to carry out the ore to crushing mills established elsewhere. By the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway this state of things is now changed. The Second Crossing of the Columbia River where the town of Farwell has been built is only forty-five miles distant from McCullough Creek and Gold Creek above mentioned, and at small expense a good pack trail is now being constructed thither, in the near future to be expanded into a waggon road. Miners and "prospectors" are already finding their way in to the gold workings that were years ago abandoned.

Nor is this all. Twenty years ago, at the time of the former excitement, a man who now occupies an important Government position was a working miner, attracted to the McCullough Creek gold fields by that desire for easily-gotten riches that has proved an *ignis fatuus* to thousands. One day, when clambering up the mountain side, he stumbled upon a rich quartz vein cropping out of the rock. He examined the material, found it to be of the best quality, and bearing a very large percentage of gold. For the reasons already given he was unable to make any use of his find. He wisely said nothing about it, but kept the secret until the time should come when it might be turned to profit. The construction of the railway has brought that time, and though no longer himself able to bear the hardships of a miner's life, he this spring fitted out a party of experienced men, and furnished them with accurate descriptions of the position of the vein. The result was that in May last the quartz vein was re-discovered, and the claim located and registered. Specimens of the ore have been brought in. They are extremely rich in gold. The material is the red, rotten quartz with which all Colorado and Montana miners are familiar. Men are now at work laying bare the vein, in order to be certain of its real extent before bringing in crushing machinery. About the same time another party discovered, higher up the Creek, a quartz vein rich in both gold and silver.

On the line of the railway in the Ile-cille-waet Pass, a few miles west of the Selkirk summit, rich silver-bearing galena lodes have been struck where the line crosses the mineral belt spoken of. All this mineral wealth will be made accessible by the opening of the railway in the near future, and districts that have hitherto been practically unknown will be brought within reach of scientific appliances.

Further to the south again, on either side of the Kootenay Lake, rich and very extensive deposits of silver ore are about being opened up by a San Francisco company. As far back as the year 1825, a young Scotch botanist, who gave his name to the Douglas pine that is peculiar to British Columbia, camped on the bank of the Lake. In smoothing off the projections of rock that jutted up in the floor of his tent, he was astonished to see glittering metal. Examination showed that this was galena, and recent assays yielded silver at the rate of \$80 per ton. For more than half-a-century this wealth has lain undeveloped; but the recent construction of the Northern Pacific Railway has made it accessible, and without doubt, at

an early date, mining operations will be carried on on an extensive scale. Hitherto the mining operations of British Columbia have been almost entirely confined to "placer work": i.e., to finding the gold that has been deposited in creek bottoms by the long continued wearing down of ledges. But little has been done to obtain the precious metal directly from the quartz veins by crushing the native ore. The completion of the national highway, passing through, as it does, almost the very centre of this vast range of mineral wealth, will without doubt give a great impetus to quartz mining; and, in future years, the cold gray slates of the Selkirk and Cariboo Mountains will be forced to give up the rich veins of gold they have so long held imprisoned, while the wild and silent valleys will resound to the clatter of the noisy stamping mills. G. C. C.

### IMPENDING PROBLEMS ACROSS THE BORDER.

WASHINGTON, September 28, 1885.

THE State of New York possesses nearly one-tenth of the population, fully one-tenth of the voters, and more than one-sixth of the wealth of the Union. Her triennial election for Governor acquires national importance by reason of the prominence given to the successful candidate as a "dark horse" in the field of Federal politics, and the electoral vote of the State is frequently decisive of a Presidential contest. These several bases of political supremacy are reinforced by the existence in the electorate of an unorganized, indeterminate yet persistent body of balloters, whose insensibility to the stock arguments and entreaties of the political bosses repeatedly reduces the latter to despair. From the unique situation thus outlined results much of good in the sphere of practical politics. Party leaders within the State are compelled to a ceaseless vigilance in watching and measuring the currents of popular thought and feeling, and party leaders throughout the Union are constrained from time to time to advance their lines to keep touch of their indispensable allies of the Empire State. The "platform," or declaration of alleged principles, of a Democratic or Republican convention in this State may be relied upon to contain the usual exaggerated summary of the lofty achievements and virtues of the party issuing it, and the customary insincere denunciation of the opposite party; but it may equally be trusted to disclose in larger and truer measure than similar emanations from conventions held elsewhere, suggestions of the new questions, or new aspects of old questions, that are pushing their way to the front for action in the one direction or the other.

With this explanation, let us see what are the questions in practical politics with which the American people are likely to occupy themselves during or within the years that lie immediately before us, taking as our guide the topics of the rival platforms lately constructed at Saratoga. Some of the readers of THE WEEK may find pleasure and, possibly, profit in laying them side by side with their own problems in politics.

The most striking fact is the apparently steady progress of the wage-earning class towards separation from the general body of the public. The judgment of our unscrupulous but sagacious platform-builders is that the workingman, technically so-called, is no longer content to be free, like the rest of the community, to combine for self-interest, but he wishes the rest of the community to part with the freedom its individual members now possess, of discriminating for or against this or that trade-union in the distribution of employment; or, in other words, boycotting is to be given a statutory form and effect. Secondly, the supply of labour in this one market is to be artificially stinted by preventing within it the operation of those natural forces by which labour unceasingly distributes itself conformably to the ratios of supply and demand. Thirdly, convicts are to be supported in idleness at the public expense, and compelled to consequent physical and moral degeneration, in order that they may in no wise "compete" with honest labour. Fourthly, the dwelling of the artisan is to be made and kept wholesome and comfortable by the state. Fifthly, the protection of the state is to be thrown around women and children employed in factories. Sixthly, taxation is to be "equalized," which presumably means the familiar graduated scale for incomes.

These incipient projects or promises of legislation point to the difference between the America of to-day and that land of "plenty," whereof the author of "Cheer, Boys, Cheer!" so roysteringly sang a matter of some forty years ago.

Leaving the pretorian camp of "Industry" for the open country, we find the state of affairs looking more cheerful. Patronage is evidently not going to regain its baleful ascendancy in the civil service, and the silver dollars, which threaten us with an avalanche as terrible as the mighty snow-slides of the Alps, are to cease accumulation and disperse their bulk in a comparatively harmless manner. Municipal offices are to be so filled and subordinated that it shall become possible to fix and enforce responsibility for abuse or neglect. Public education is to be further vitalized and extended so that gross ignorance shall not be a prime factor in the corruption of the ballot. Protection may not strengthen its grasp on the national polity, but its progress towards the door is to be by slow, easy paces. Transportation rates are to be dealt with on rational principles, while the state maintains its power of control and correction. Prohibition has manifestly not crystallized in the public mind as the ultimate remedy for the evils of drunkenness; neither has high license, discriminating license, nor direct state-management of the retail traffic; nor anything but the makeshift of local option, that works only in small communities among which habitual drinking and habitual idleness prevail beyond the average of the country at large. What an opportunity this pause and uncertainty in the political development of the question presents to the churches to reconnect themselves, by organized effort working through moral agencies, with the active life and interests of society!