The Colonist.

FRIDAY, JUNE 6, 1890.

A PERPLEXITY.

The Columbian has become the bitterest and the most unscrupulous enemy which the Government has among the newspapers of the province. The change that has come over it is marvellous. Until a month or two ago it was friendly to the Government. It gave the Robson Government and its immediate predecessors its cordial support. It had nothing to say against their general policy, and the personnel of the different administrations was not objectionable to it in any respect. What has caused the Columbian's perversion? Why has it assumed an attitude entirely hostile to the men in power? What has turned its honey into gall? The Government's redistribution policy has displeased the Columbian. It has not done what it considers justice to New Westminster in the matter of representation, therefore nothing that the Government has done, is doing, or can do, is right. It has by that single act become utterly depraved and is no longer worthy of the support of the Columbian. That paper does not see that in decrying the past acts of the Government it is condemning itself. If the Government deserves to be defeated for what it has done in the past the Columbian should be repudiated by its patrons, for it approved of the course which the administration has pursued. According to our contemporary's own showing, it has been these many years supporting what it ought to have condemned.

The Columbian a good deal more than insinuates that the Government has become corrupt, that during its long term of power it has grown dishonest. It says:

"It is almost time that the people awoke, and sent honest, independent, and wide-awake men down to James Bay to look into the books, and at least give the Augean stables a rigid inspection."

There is a little confusion of thought in this passage and some mixture of metaphor, but we see that our Westminster contemporary is becoming notorious for its figures of speech. It will be noted that this Government supporter turned Opposition organ, is more bitter and more unscrupulous in its denunciation of the party in power and of the men who form the administration than its oldest enemies. It is observable that the regular Opposition, so to speak, have not once hinted that the Government is corrupt. They have not ventured to accuse any of its members of anything approaching to dishonesty. But no sooner does this disappointed supporter join the enemies of the Government than it begins to talk about books that need looking into and Augean stables that require to be inspected. Has the Columbian been all along supporting men whom it knew to be dishonest and corrupt, or does it defame those whom it but the other day admired and praised, out of spite and malice? Are its accusations and reproaches to be looked upon as are the vilification and the malicious inuendoes of a cast-off servant?

Every unprejudiced man and every real friend of the province is pleased and proud to see that, warm as political controversy is in the province, and eager as the Opposition is to discredit the Government, there are in British Columbia no political scandals. The opponents of the Government—keen-sighted and outspoken as they are—do not accuse any one connected with the Government, either as member or supporter, with having misappropriated the people's money, or made a corrupt use of his political influence. In these days, when scandals are rife in other parts of the Dominion, this is most gratifying. It is not likely that this Opposition recruit this deserter, will succeed in proving an accusation against the Government which its bitterest enemies did not venture even to prefer.

The Westminster renegade repeats a stupid cry which has been raised by the Opposition. It is that the Government has been in power long enough, and that the province wants a change. To use its own words: "It is good policy on general principles to stir up the incumbents of office and their hangers-on at least once in a decade." Does any sane man on general principles consider it good policy to turn off a servant merely because he has served him long and honestly? The general principle is that when an employer secures the services of a man who is both honest and capable he should be kept as long as he is able to do his work. Such servants are too rare and too valuable to be dismissed for a mere caprice. It is against all sound principle to make length of service a disqualification.

As it is with a private servant so is it with public ones. The country which has found honest and able men to take care of its public affairs would be foolish in the extreme to turn out men who had served them well and with whom they had no fault to find in order merely to put in their places new and untried men. Of course the Columbian does not mean what it says. If Mr. Robson and his colleagues had given New Westminster another representative, no matter how the rest of the province fared, it would be only too glad to advocate their being retained in office any length of time longer. But as they did not give Westminster that extra member there is no good in them and they ought to be hurled from power forthwith.

But the Government will not be judged in this narrow and senseless way by many even of the readers of the Columbian. Consenting to the compromise with respect to representation did not change the nature of the men who form the Government, or make that bad which was but the other day good. Sensible people in New Westminster will, like sensible people in all the other parts of the province, judge the Government by all its acts, not by one feature of its policy. They will consider that policy as a whole, and will form their opinion on all its merits and demerits. If they find, as we know they will, that the Government is, when all its record is examined, a good Government and that its policy has been beneficial to the whole province, they will not allow sectional jealousy to blind them to its good qualities. They will send men to support it in spite of the savings of the turn-coat Columbian.

AN EXCITED COLONY.

The ancient colony of Newfoundland is just now very greatly excited. It is not surprising that its inhabitants are deeply indignant. The people of any other colony, if they were in the same position, would be as greatly and as generally agitated. How would the inhabitants of this Island feel if men of a foreign nation occupied part of its coast and exercised powers and privileges to which the treaties between that nation and Great Britain gave them no right? It is natural that the inhabitants of so old a colony as Newfoundland should look upon the country they have so long occupied, and which they have, in a sense, made, as their own. They would be sure to regard with jealousy any nation that had been allowed, by an ancient treaty, to fish in its waters and occupy its territory for any purpose whatever. When that nation made encroachments on what the people considered their exclusive rights — encroachments which were not warranted by treaty — would they not become angry, and if the mother country failed to assist them in asserting what they knew to be their rights would not their indignation find adequate expression. If Vancouver Islanders only try to put themselves in the place of the people of Newfoundland they will be at no loss to account for the disturbed state of the people's mind in that colony at the present moment.

The French have not only asserted their right to catch lobsters in the inland waters of Newfoundland, but they claim, that the British fishermen have no right to exercise their calling on the parts of the coast which they occupy. This is what F. Heine Geffcken, in the Fortnightly Review, says about the claim of the French to catch and can lobsters on the coast of Newfoundland:

"British factories for the canning of lobsters being established, the French not only asserted the right to do the same, but maintained that within the parts of the coast reserved for their summer fisheries the English had no right to fish for lobsters and possess factories for canning them. This claim is preposterous, for from the beginning the French privileges were confined to codfish, as is proved by defining the season in which fishing is allowed. The Treaty of Utrecht expressly says: 'pisces in terra exsiccare permissum erit,' which can have no possible reference to lobster catching or the erection of factories for preserving and canning lobsters. The Newfoundland authorities, therefore, were perfectly entitled to forbid these proceedings, as not being within the the treaty privileges accorded to the French, and to maintain the right of the British establishments, unless their business was so exercised as to interrupt the French cod-fishery bona fide carried on. Yet the French have raised a great cry as if they had been subject to a gross injustice, big speeches have been made in the Chamber, and the ministry have maintained that they would not yield one jot of the ancient treaty rights. What these are we have seen; the right of fishing in foreign waters is an anomaly, and where it rests on express concession it must be strictly interpreted."

What the upshot of the agitation in Newfoundland will be it is difficult to foresee. If it would have the result of stimulating the Government to make greater and more resolute efforts to come to a settlement with France with respect to the interpretation to be put upon the Treaty of Utrecht and other treaties, it will do good. But we fear it will have no such result. The Imperial Government hates to be hurried, and the diplomatists of all countries have a very leisurely way of doing business. It is said that France is in a very bad humor just now and would quite as soon go to war as not. To a people who are in that frame of mind one pretext for breaking the peace is as good as another. When the Newfoundland question was discussed by the Montreal Board of Trade, a few days ago, Mr. J. X. Perrault, who has lately returned from Paris, said that the Board was discussing "a very dangerous question," and that "France would not cede one inch of her territory. France was a dangerous country to deal with at present." Dangerous or not, the Newfoundland question must be settled one way or another before very long, and it seems to us that if Great Britain took a firm stand the French Government would agree to a settlement which would be considered fair by impartial men.

THE ORGAN FLOUNDERING.

The Organ wasted a couple of columns yesterday in chopping logic on a question of law. It is quite evident that it does not know enough to realize how little it does know about the interpretation of statutes. Does our contemporary really expect that there is any one in the community who believes that its opinion on such a question is worth one single straw? There is not a man in the city who would take its advice on a question of law in which so small a sum as twenty dollars is involved. Who, then, will be found to pay attention to it when it gives a legal opinion in direct opposition to that of two of admittedly the best and soundest lawyers in the province? Let the organ produce some authority which people generally respect in favor of its contention, and then it will be worth while noticing what it says. But this it does not attempt to do. It lays down what it considers the law on the subject, and seems to forget that ninety-nine out of every hundred persons in the community know that when it does so it goes hopelessly beyond its depth. It is painful to witness its floundering. Why does it not call some capable person to its rescue?

Children Cry for Pitcher's Castoria.

THE NOMINATIONS.

Candidates of the Legislative Assembly for all districts of the province except Cassiar were nominated yesterday. The Government have good men in the field and the prospect is that it will be supported by a sweeping majority. The reason of this is evident to every man who thinks. The Government has rendered a good account. Its members have served the people faithfully and efficiently. No section of the province has been neglected. Its inhabitants, wherever they live, whether in town or country, near the centres of population or in the remote and thinly peopled sections, see that the government has done its best for them all. No section or district has been overlooked or neglected. What the Government could do, with the means at its disposal to improve their condition, has been done. This is a great thing in the Government's favor, and the Opposition see and deplore it. For, after all, it is in its attention to the people's wants that a government, in any of the provinces of the Dominion, shows its ability and its faithfulness. The scope of provincial governments is not wide. Their duties are very important, and have a direct and immediate bearing on the welfare of the people. It is their business to see after a large number of small matters, each of which does not appear to be of very much consequence; but on the way in which that business is transacted the comfort and the convenience of the inhabitants of the province to a very great extent depend. To see that these small matters are properly attended to must be the policy of the Government of the Province, no matter of whom it is composed or to what party it belongs. That the present Government has administered the affairs of the Province carefully and honestly, no one who has any regard for the truth can deny. The people, seeing everywhere around them, evidences of the care and attention of the Government, feel favorably disposed towards it. This makes the work of the candidate who supports the Government comparatively light. The electors conclude that the Government which has looked well after them in the past, will not neglect them in the future. And their reasoning is sound.

Our information as to the politics and the prospects of the candidates on the Mainland is by no means complete. With respect to the Island more is known.

In this city both sides have a full ticket. The Opposition, as usual, boast loudly, but the Government canvassers speak with great confidence about the prospects of their candidates. There is, they say, an excellent chance of getting all four Government candidates returned.

The Opposition did not nominate a full ticket in Esquimalt District. Appeals were made to several gentlemen to stand with Mr. Helgesen, but none of them could see that it was their duty to sacrifice themselves. So Mr. Helgesen must suffer for his party alone. Messrs. Pooley and Higgins will have a walk over in that district.

In Victoria District, as in Esquimalt, the leaders of the Opposition were not able to induce any of their followers to bear their standard. It was taken up by Mr. Carey, who is a very late acquisition. It is conceded that Messrs. Anderson and Eberts are certain of being returned.

On the Islands Messrs. Booth and Ford are the Government candidates, and Mr. Robertson runs in the Opposition interest. It is certain that one or other of the Government candidates will be returned.

The issues in Alberni are entirely personal. Both the candidates are supporters of the Government.

Mr. Keith, the miners' representative, has been returned for Nanaimo. He is, we learn, an intelligent and active-minded man, who may be, if he is judicious, of much use to the men who have elected him. We greatly regret the retirement from the contest of Mr. Haslam. He won for himself during the single session which he sat in the Assembly the esteem and respect of men of both parties. He is a man of ability and discretion and gave promise of being a most useful public man. He was a representative of which any constituency should be proud. The province requires such men as Mr. Haslam to do its public work.

The Opposition has by some strange oversight the District of Nanaimo to themselves. It is difficult to understand why the Government is not represented among the candidates in the field.

From what we hear Comox will return a Government supporter.

On the Mainland there will be a pretty severe contest in several constituencies, but we have a notion that there are some very unpleasant surprises in store for certain of those sanguine gentlemen who are boasting so loudly of what the Opposition are going to do in the Mainland Districts, and particularly in the section of the Lower Fraser.

There will be a great deal of hard work done in both the Mainland and the Island between now and election day, and we are satisfied that the more the claims of the Government are discussed, the stronger will they appear in the eyes of all unprejudiced men.

THE OPPOSITION.

The Opposition are singularly lacking in men of energy, ability and experience. Let the reader go over the list of Opposition candidates and he will be surprised to see how few of them have made their mark in the province. Most of them are very respectable men, but what can be expected of them as representatives of the people? How many of them are fit to make a decent show as members of an Opposition? And, if, by some miracle, enough of them should be returned to form a majority of the new Assembly, they would be utterly incompetent to carry on the Government of the province for twelve months. As we have seen, during the last four years, men are sometimes returned to the Legislature who are too incompetent to perform even decently well the duties that fall to the lot of members of the Opposition. The reader has only to see how badly the Opposition, during the last four years, did its work, to see that it would be folly to elect many of the Opposition candidates simply to oppose.

RACE AND RELIGION.

We were quite certain that Mr. Mercier would, when appealing to the people for re-election, take advantage of the Ontario agitation to represent himself as the champion of his race and his religion. He has done this as the following extract from his address will show:

"Who is it," he says, "wants to abolish the French language and separate schools? In Toronto and Ottawa they are the allies of the bleus of the Province of Quebec. Mr. Taillon has never, that I am aware of, repudiated Mr. Meredith or Mr. McCarthy, who are both agreed upon attaining the same end. That end, everyone knows, involves the abolition of the French language and separate schools. I do not believe that Mr. Taillon entertains these ideas, accepts these fatal opinions, and is ready to endorse this triumph. No; but he is doing what he did in 1885 and 1886. He is mute in presence of the enemy. He dares not resent the attack of the enemies of our race and our religion. In 1885 and 1886 he refused to step in against those who are crushing our brethren in the Northwest, and now he is silent in the presence of those who want to banish the French language and to destroy separate schools. It is always the same old story, the same disgraceful, fatal story, it is the minority in the person of Mr. Taillon agreeing to crawl before the person of the Orangeman. What is to be done under the circumstances? Only one thing—to unite as one man to repel the attack. The fanatics want to crush us."

Politically, in the proper sense of the term, Mr. Mercier is weak. His administration, if judged on its own merits, must be pronounced a failure. He has not realized the expectations he raised, and he has not performed his promises. There is, besides, evidence enough to show that his administration has not been pure. His opponents, if they had only his political record to criticise, would be able to prove to the people that he is not worthy of their confidence. But the Equal Rights people, chiefly of another province have put a weapon into his hands, which he does not scruple to use, and any one who knows him and the people he has to deal with knows how ready and how general the response will be to such appeals as the one from which we have quoted. Victory has been made easy for the Quebec Premier by those who ardently desire his defeat.

DOMESTIC SERVANTS.

Good female servants are greatly needed in this province. It is very difficult, indeed, to get a clean, tidy, willing and capable servant girl, no matter what wages are offered. It seems strange that servants should be so scarce in this country, when there are so many women in Great Britain who would make excellent servants, who cannot find employment. In British Columbia the wages are high and employment easily procured; in the Old Country wages are low and situations very scarce. A society has been formed, the object of which seems to be to equalize matters, to some extent, as regards domestic service on the two continents. It is called the Pacific Coast Employment Society, and its object is to select young women of character and capacity in England for employment as domestic servants on the Pacific Coast. Every precaution is taken to send out none but women of good character, who desire, when they get to this side of the Atlantic, to earn an honest living. The Hon. Mrs. Joyce, St. John's Croft, Winchester Co., Southampton, has undertaken the duties of secretary and agent on the other side of the Atlantic, and the Right Rev. Bishop of New Westminster, the Rev. Arthur Beanlands, and B. W. Pearse, Esq. of Fernwood, Victoria, are to be on the executive committee.

Our readers will see from this that the matter is in good hands, and that employers in this province and intending immigrants in England may feel assured that any engagements made by the Society will be carried out in good faith and to the letter. There are so many emigration schemes in England, the main object of which is to make money out of the emigrants and those who help them, that any new emigration project is looked upon with distrust. But the names we have mentioned are the best guarantee that the scheme is intended not to profit its promoters in a pecuniary way, but to benefit young women wanting employment in Great Britain and housekeepers on the Pacific Coast, who are greatly in need of female servants.

The scheme is not a charitable one in the ordinary sense of the word charitable. It is proposed to help the unemployed young women, but it is intended that they shall, out of their own earnings in this country, return the money advanced to pay their passage. The sum of £65 is to be advanced for each young woman. The girls are to come out in parties of twenty-five under the care of a matron, and every precaution is to be taken both on board ship and in the cars to keep them clear of all evil influences. They will be well cared for both on the way and after they arrive here until places are found for them. The arrangements, as far as they have been described to us, are very good indeed, and quite sufficient for the purpose. A good girl in coming out with one of these parties will be exposed to no danger, and great pains will be taken to select none but good girls.

The success of the scheme altogether depends upon the kind of women who are brought out by the society. If the Society brings out girls of good character, able and willing to work, they will be of the greatest advantage to the Province, and will be a comfort and a help to the ladies who employ them. But, if the proteges of the Society are, on the whole, unable and unwilling to do their work well, if they are untidy, impudent and lax as to their morals, they will not be of any benefit to the housekeepers, and they will be anything but a desirable acquisition to the community. John Chinaman, with all his faults, is a hundred times better than such women as these. If then, the Society is to confer benefits on British Columbia, the greatest possible care must be taken in the selection of the young women which it sends.

We wish the Pacific Coast Employment Society every success. Its members are engaged in a good work, and we sincerely trust that they will do it well.

AD MISERICORDIAM.

The appeal to the pity of the electors made by Mr. Beaven in the Victoria theatre a few evenings ago was extremely foolish. He would have men who find no fault with the Government vote for Opposition candidates because there must be an Opposition. The leader who makes this appeal evidently despairs of having a majority to support him. But why support an Opposition that has proved itself useless? If the electors on the thirteenth of June elect Government supporters in every district in the province an Opposition would be developed as soon as it was needed. Men in this province will never be the slavish followers of a bad Government. As soon as the Government adopted a policy which sensible and independent men in the House and in the country considered was opposed to the well-being of the Province, it would soon find itself opposed by men who would do all in their power to prevent the passage of measures which they considered bad. That would not be a mere official opposition elected to oppose the Government whether it did right or wrong, or whether its policy was good or bad, but an opposition based upon principle, the members of which opposed the Government because they were convinced that it was pursuing a course injurious to the interests of the country.

This opposition, if it had good grounds for its objections to the policy of the administration, would soon have support in the country, and a rearrangement of parties would be certain to take place. No reflecting elector is in the least afraid of the Government's being too strong. As long as it is a good Government it cannot be too strong, and when it becomes corrupt or unpatriotic it will create for itself enemies both in the Legislature and out of it. There is no fear of a provincial government being able to buy a majority.

Let the electors send men of ability and independent men to the House of Assembly, and no matter how strongly they may be in favor of the present Government now, as soon as it does what they believe is opposed to the interests of the province, it will find itself strongly and effectually opposed.

ITALY.

Italy is suffering from what is ruining many individuals in every community in these days. She has been living beyond her means. She has been attempting to vie in expenditure with her richer neighbors. The consequences are debt, embarrassment and misery. Germany, Austria, France and Russia had big armies, Italy concluded that she must have a big army also. The Great Powers were building large fleets of expensive ships, Italy considered that her interests required her to follow their example. The greater part of the money needed to pay and arm the soldiers and to build and equip the ships was borrowed. The taxes were increased to meet the new obligations. The people of Italy are not rich. The increased burdens were more than many of them could bear. The Government did not want money only, it wanted men—men to fill the ranks of its disproportionately large army. The young men, the bread-winners, were forced to become soldiers. To escape the intolerable load of taxation and the equally-intolerable military service, Italians left their country in thousands. They emigrated to the United States and to South America, and the country is still being drained of its life's blood. The Government, it is said, is the next thing to bankrupt, and times are so hard that great numbers of the people cannot find employment. It is evident that the Italian Government must do something more effective than to drive a few newspaper correspondents out of the country because their representations of the real state of the nation's finances were only too true. It will, if it desires to escape ruin, have to go slow. It must cut down its expenditure and begin to live within its means. This is the only cure for the evils from which the country is now suffering. Its Government will have to reverse the policy which it has for the last few years pursued. The work of retrenchment is a very unpleasant one for a proud man or a proud nation to begin, but, if it is not commenced in time voluntarily, it will be forced upon the spendthrift, and then it is infinitely more humiliating and greatly less beneficial. But Italy has great recuperative powers, and, if its Government acts wisely and discreetly, it will, before very long, be again in a flourishing condition.

SCRAPS.

"Did you like Miss Faircomplexion's evening dress?" "A portion of it." "Yes, what part?" "The part she had on."

Niagara Hackman—One dollar! Visitor—What for? Hackman—Information. Visitor—You haven't told me anything. Hackman—Didn't you ask me what I'd charge t' drive you t' the falls? Visitor—Yes; and you said $5, which is altogether too much. Hackman—Well, d'yer suppose I'm goin' ter give away price lists fer nothin'? Ante!

Truthful Tramp—I'd like a drink, but I don't suppose y' u'd want to change this five dollar bill. Bartender (briskly)—No trouble about change. Here's your medicine. Tramp—Thanks. Ah! That's good whiskey. Bartender—Eh? Lookee here! This bill is no good! Tramp—Yes, I said you wouldn't want to change it.

Some people who are constantly talking of that rare virtue, consideration for the feelings of others, have themselves no consideration whatever. Barnes, after returning home one night, remarked to his wife that Vance was the most considerate man he had ever seen. "How so?" his wife asked. "Why, he sat for three hours and let me do all the talking."

PUBLIC MEETING AT PLUMPER'S PASS.

In proof of the march of progress, largely dependent on the liberal expenditure of the government in roads, wharves, etc., the first political meeting of any note was held in the school-house, on Mayne Island, on Monday, the 26th May. A representative gathering from Salt Spring and the other islands formed an attentive and appreciative audience.

Proceedings commenced at 3 p. m. and lasted about two hours. Mr. Pigg was called to the chair, and opened the proceedings by urging the people to weigh well the views of the several candidates, and to remember the gravity and importance of the situation, etc.; then calling upon Mr. Ford, a candidate in favor of the government policy, to address the meeting. This gentleman, in a brief and temperate manner, after enlarging upon the important railway schemes that were now in process of development in the province, passed on to a review of the schools' system, advocating the undesirability of tampering with district schools, and finally cuting a strong protest against government protection of high schools. He then went on to say, that the district had not received its just share of the appropriations. Out of $27,500 appropriated for the district, $3,500 only received. This was not fair. Winding up his brief and interesting speech by stating that the duty of members was to see that all got justice, as was the evident intention of the government policy.

Mr. Booth, the government representative, was then called on to address the meeting. In opening, he said, some fault with his support of opposition in former times, but he had acted according to his belief and conscience, but, with time came overwhelming proof of the superiority of the government, and their liberal and advanced policy was the reason of his change of front. He believed in an independent vote and not a blind following of party. He had always worked harmoniously with Hon. Mr. Robson in former years, and was sure he could do so still. He believed in an advanced railway policy. By such means lands that were unfit for agricultural purposes, could be opened up for mining purposes, etc. The educational aspect of affairs, was a very important one. He was in favor of common schools, but objected to High schools. He believed in an ordinary education for the masses.

Mr. Booth then entered upon the question of roads, and in an exhaustive manner tried to show his anxiety to see all well served in this important particular. For a long time our district existed at the tail end of Cowichan, and so in a measure had been lost sight off. In an able manner he foreshadowed the policy of the government in the future in regard to the islands, by subsidizing a daily steamer. In concluding, Mr. B. inferred that the opposition candidate was like the dog's tail wagging the dog (a dead one at that), but it was better for the people to take hold of the tail of the government and let the government wag them.

Mr. Robertson, the opposition candidate, was then called on to address the meeting. He said: "You will be disappointed in me, as I have not studied the railway question in Australia or Canada. He considered Mr. Beaven's policy bad, and contemptible in some instances. He (Mr. B.) would not be a leader in future, unless he promises a liberal policy. He was not an oppositionist through pure cussedness, but believed it to be necessary to have some one to oppose the government. He disapproved of the government's railway policy and blamed the government for everything that had gone wrong in the province.

Then followed replies on the part of each speaker, and the meeting terminated by votes of thanks to the gentlemen who had taken the trouble to expound their views, and also to the chairman.

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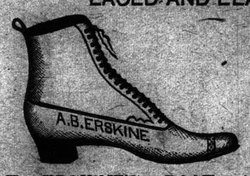

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