

The Colonist. FRIDAY, JULY 27, 1900.

THE WOMEN'S COUNCIL.

The range of subjects with which the Women's Council will deal is judging from the standing committee appointed and the resolutions proposed, a very wide one. Committees were named on the following matters:

Laws for the Better Protection of Women and Children. Custodial Care of Feeble-Minded Women. Care of the Aged Poor. Immigration.

Raising of Loan for Doukhobor Women. Aid for the Transvaal Contingent. Bureau of Information. The Canadian Women's Hand-Book.

Some of these matters do not come home to us here very closely, as, for example, the protection of women and children and the care of the aged poor. Neither has there been felt, so far as we are aware, any need for action in regard to the custody of feeble-minded women. We can, however, believe that these subjects are of great importance in other parts of Canada, if not here. The raising of a loan for the Doukhobor women is a subject concerning which we know very little in this province, but we fancy that British Columbians will do their duty in the premises when once they learn what it is. The Canadian Women's Hand-Book is a matter that calls for no comment.

The Press, Immigration and the subject of aid for the Transvaal Contingent are matters upon which much might be said. Here in British Columbia we feel in the fullest degree the obligation resting upon us as Canadians to do what we can for the gallant patriots who went to South Africa to fight the battles of their country. Every one will await with interest the request which the Council shall make upon this subject, and we think we can promise that it will have to be exceedingly unreasonable not to meet with the cordial endorsement of the people of this province.

Immigration is a subject upon which the ladies will find that the people of the Coast entertain very strong feelings. It is a many-sided question. It relates not only to the influx of people from the Orient, but the proper surveillance of the channels through which immigration comes from Europe and its sources. In this connection the case of the Doukhobor women naturally suggests itself. It cannot be wise to refuse to accept immigrants for whose relief it is necessary to inaugurate something like a national movement. But when immigration is spoken of, something more than keeping undesirable people out must be taken into consideration. Canada needs population, and especially does this Western Coast need it. We have resources that are unexpended in the world for men and women of sobriety, industry and ordinary good sense. If the ladies of the Council return to their homes more fully impressed with this fact than they were when they came here, their visit to British Columbia can hardly fail to be productive of good.

Speaking of the Press, there is one phase of newspaper work to which we give direct attention of our visitors. British Columbia is the only part of Canada where Sunday is observed in newspaper offices. Nearly every person connected with a newspaper in this province goes home on Saturday night and does not return to work until Monday morning. In each office a few men work for an hour or two after midnight and a few for an hour or two early in the morning, but every one is at liberty to devote Sunday to rest or worship as he sees fit. It is otherwise in Eastern cities. There the reporters take up their assignments at noon on Sunday as on other days; and in the discharge of the regular duties they have to see people during the day just as they do on week days. The editorial writers have to repair to their rooms and take up their pens, and the politicians and others select Sunday as a particularly favorable day to interview them on subjects calling for editorial treatment. The business offices are opened and merchants and others come in to see about their advertisements, and the writers of advertisements for large business houses do their work as on other days. Later on the compositor goes to work, the telegraph operators are at their desks and all the hurry and turmoil of a week day is on. It is safe to say that a Monday morning paper entails Sunday work for twenty people where a Sunday morning paper does for one. Yet some few men and women in the East wish to do on week days. The editorial writers have to repair to their rooms and take up their pens, and the politicians and others select Sunday as a particularly favorable day to interview them on subjects calling for editorial treatment. The business offices are opened and merchants and others come in to see about their advertisements, and the writers of advertisements for large business houses do their work as on other days. Later on the compositor goes to work, the telegraph operators are at their desks and all the hurry and turmoil of a week day is on. It is safe to say that a Monday morning paper entails Sunday work for twenty people where a Sunday morning paper does for one. Yet some few men and women in the East wish to do on week days.

THE AGENT-GENERALSHIP. Speaking in the house yesterday, Mr. Joseph Martin said that the reason why the Semlin government did away with the office of Agent-General in London was the manner in which the incumbent of the position was discharging his duties. A bald statement like this may be met by an equally bald denial. It never was alleged that the late Agent-General did not efficiently discharge his duties. The habit of the members of the Semlin party, when in opposition, was to attack Mr. Vernon and say all manner of hard things about him, but he never was accused of neglecting his official position. The Semlin party's opposition claimed to oppose the agent-generalship on principle. They used to tell the country that the province had no need of an agent-general. When Mr. Martin attempts to excuse Mr. Semlin

and his government for their action in the premises, he is really excusing himself, for he was the consenting party to the closing of the office. We do not believe that he ever took the slightest trouble to ascertain how Mr. Vernon discharged his duties. He simply found his colleague in the government determined to get Mr. Vernon out, and he assented. When the responsibility of administering the affairs of the province devolved on his own shoulders he was careful to insert in his platform that the office ought to be re-established. The reason for closing the office is not now very material, but it ought not to go uncontradicted that it was because Mr. Vernon failed in the discharge of his duties. So far from this being the case, he was an efficient officer, and one whose long familiarity with the affairs of British Columbia made him an authority upon all subjects relating to the welfare of the province.

DELAY AT SKAGWAY.

We print a letter this morning from Mr. Tagwell, in which he complains of the delay of freight at Skagway. This thing, when it came to hand on Saturday, was held over in order that the representatives of the White Pass & Yukon railway might be consulted on the subject. Inquiry shows that delays may occur in the transit of freight through Skagway, but they are not proportionately greater than those which arise in other localities where freight is transferred from water to rail, when account is taken of the fact that goods at Skagway have to pass the supervision of the customs house officers of two nations. Mr. Tagwell speaks of the greater delay which goods purchased in Skagway receive. This is almost inevitable under any arrangement that can be made, for the merchant on the spot can always get advantages over his more distant rivals.

The delay in regard to personal baggage is certainly very annoying, but such delays are not peculiar to Skagway. Baggage in bond goes through promptly enough, but it is that which the traveller carries with him that is frequently held back. We have made some inquiry as to the reason of this, and without going into details now, we are very desirous to see anything which might be thought to reflect on well-meaning officials—we are glad to be able to state that Mr. Graves, the president of the White Pass & Yukon railway, who was spoken to on this subject, said that as soon as the work of construction was over—and that will now be very soon—the company proposes to take this subject up with the view to removing every ground of reasonable question. As Mr. Graves says, the interests of the company are against delays of any kind. Their profit consists in handling freight and passengers as rapidly as possible. As regards the transportation of perishable freight, this is a class of freight where the shipper must take a certain degree of risk. Perishable freight from Canada could not a year ago be taken into the Yukon at all. The just cause of complaint, and their request met with the immediate assent of the United States government. There are lines of railway, where immense quantities of perishable freight are handled, which provide special facilities for its transportation at special rates. Where this cannot be done by reason of the small volume of business, as in the case of Skagway, perishable goods ought to be forwarded by express.

We have every hope that before next season's business begins, such difficulties as are met with at Skagway by shippers will be removed. At the same time, business men must bear in mind that delays occur at other points besides Skagway. At the last meeting of the Council of the Board of Trade there was some discussion as to the delay of Victoria freight at Vancouver.

THE ORIENTAL QUESTION.

Pending the uncertainty which prevails as to the fate of the legations in Peking, there is a great deal of doubt as to what the powers will do. If the United States minister escapes safe and sound, that nation is not likely to take any part in such effort as may be made to discipline China and secure safer conditions in the future. If all the ministers, except the German representative, are found well, the situation will be relieved of much of its horror. When Germany would feel bound to take under such circumstances is not very clear. The Kaiser claims a sort of patent right to the discovery of "The Yellow Peril." He was the first prominent European statesman to realize that China might give Occidental civilization a great deal of trouble in the near future. Less distinguished observers saw this years ago, but their warnings were unheeded. The Kaiser put his views in the form of an allegorical painting, which he had executed under his direction, and it created no little discussion when it was shown to the world. When the news of Baron Kettler's murder reached Berlin, the Kaiser made a decidedly inflammatory speech, in which he spoke of dictating terms of peace at Peking. Singularly enough, though terms of peace were talked of, the German government had not, nor has it yet, made a declaration of war. A report has come out from Peking that the Chinese authorities would apologize for the killing of the minister and make every possible reparation, but we have no hint as to how such a proposal would meet the wishes of Germany.

But these matters are only the preliminaries of a great question. China has at last been aroused. We may hope as we will that the present trouble will pass away, that the Chinese government will discover some means whereby "its face" may be preserved, and we greatly fear it will be found impossible to restore that status which

existed before the Boxer movement assumed its present stage. There has not been such a movement against foreigners since the people of China were first brought into contact with them. A fear seems to have seized the people and they are, as it were, in a condition between sleep and wakefulness, irresponsible for what they do. Several writers claim that to give Japan a leading place in dealing with these conditions will be a policy full of danger. They say that under the tutelage of Japan the yellow race will learn its own tremendous power and be tempted to exercise it. As yet the Chinese have even less conception of what lies outside of their country than we have of the conditions existing within it. Once let them learn that there is a vast and rich world lying beyond their borders, and that they are strong enough to conquer it, and they may repeat in the Twentieth Century the events which led to the overthrow of imperial Rome.

CIVIC IMPROVEMENTS.

"If a little block paving is so good a thing, why not make one job of the whole business and pave all the streets, which require it?" This question was asked the Colonist by a ratepayer yesterday. There is much to be said in favor of the answer which the question suggests. Civic improvement means that taxation for permanent improvements is not a burden. It is more in the nature of an investment. If we properly pave the business streets of the city we undoubtedly add to the value of the real property within the city. Perhaps the enhanced value will not be realized immediately, but it will be in time. We suppose that Victoria is like every other city in the world, where expenditure for permanent improvements is resisted by the persons who are in the long run most benefited by it. That sort of thing seems inseparable from municipal progress. But one of the responsibilities attaching to the ownership of property is that of paying taxes. People ought to think of this before they buy property. Some one asked at the City Hall meeting the other night if any property in the city could be sold for its assessed value, and some one else answered in the negative. Suppose the question had been put this way: Could any of the large unimproved estates in the city be sold for the price paid for it? Would not the answer have been in the affirmative? What makes real estate worth more in Victoria to-day than it was in the days when the Hudson's Bay fort was the centre and almost the circumference of the city? The answer of course is that the appreciation of value is due to the growth of population and the making of improvements. Is it not reasonable, therefore, to argue that the coming of more population and the making of further improvements will further add to the value of property within the city? "Improve the city" ought to be the watchword of the people of Victoria. Nothing can contribute so much to the well-being of the city as the making of improvements. Money spent on permanent improvements is a good investment, provided the expenditure is made with ordinary good judgment. We therefore hope that next year the city council will grapple with the question of street paving on a larger scale than has been attempted in this line hitherto.

THE FISHERMEN'S STRIKE.

The strike on the Fraser river was the subject of discussion in the house yesterday and the members participating in it are to be congratulated upon the very moderate tone of their speeches. It is especially proper that a matter of this kind should be ventilated in the house. The calling out of the militia was adversely commented upon by some of the speakers, and Mr. Ralph Smith seemed to be under the impression that the government was in some way responsible for this; but such is not the case. Under the laws of the Dominion three justices of the peace may call upon the militia to act in certain cases of emergency, and the government does not necessarily interfere in the matter at all. The best practice in such matters is for the justices of the peace to consult with the officers of the crown before taking action of this kind, for the responsibility of calling on the aid of an armed force is a very serious one. It is not always possible to do this, and Mr. Green was somewhat hasty when he said the justices, who acted in the premises, deserve censure. If they were to side to every question, Mr. McPhillips took what we think is the correct position, when he said that the house ought not to constitute itself the judges on an insufficient statement of facts. We feel, however, that, in every case where this extreme power of the justices is exercised, the facts ought to be made fully known. On the whole, it is perhaps just as well that the public should be reminded of the existence of this power on the part of the justices of the peace. It cannot be made too clear that no man and no body of men has a right to coerce others in the matter of work or non-work. When this is thoroughly well understood there will be a minimum of interference by capitalists or labor unions with the rights of individuals.

The explanation given by the Attorney-General was in every way satisfactory. He showed that the government had observed a strictly impartial course between the canon and the fishermen, and had instructed their officers to swear in as many special constables as were necessary. He produced evidence to show that there were undoubtedly cases of intimidation on the part of the fishermen and that the outlook was very serious indeed, and while the government did not know the reasons given for calling out the militia, he claimed that the house should suspend judgment until all the facts were known. Many persons will be

impressed by Mr. Pooley's views about calling out the militia, which are, substantially, that "an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure."

THE FISHERMEN'S STRIKE.

The calling out of the militia for the purpose of protecting those men who desire to catch salmon and sell them at 20 cents each, is a demonstration that we are living in a free country and that no one may presume to dictate to his neighbor what he shall do in the matter of earning his livelihood. Men may go on strike, if they want to; but when they undertake to say that others shall not give, but as in law we accept the law, and they are going beyond it with and must expect to be brought up with and have already lost more than they would have made extra if their demand for 25 cents a fish had been complied with. They were induced to take their unwise attitude by a few agitators. The very great majority of the fishermen are law-abiding, well-meaning people, who only ask to be allowed to earn reasonable wages. They are quite prepared to accept the price which the market can afford to give, but as in the case of the fishermen, their sensible view of matters is overborne by demagogic agitators, by men who have nothing to lose. We are very sorry that it became necessary to take the extreme step of calling out the militia, but either there is law in this province and there is not, and the only way to show that there is, under such circumstances as have prevailed in Stoverson, is to have a demonstration in force that men will be protected in the exercise of their rights.

ROADS TO KLONDIKE.

We find in the Seattle Times an interview with Mr. H. U. Crockett, general manager of the Rock Island-Alaska Mining Company, in which the following paragraph occurs: "Apart from the matter of royalty the two greatest drawbacks to the development of the Klondike are the high price of provisions and the lack of traffic on the creeks. The charge for freight on goods is only 2 cents a pound, while to those where no trail has been made the charge is 10 cents. It has been suggested that the government authorities take at least a portion of the royalty and devote it to the making of good trails, and it is believed that this will be done. Hundreds of new properties will be developed as soon as existing trails are improved. Mr. Schutt & Willis, on Gold Run, paid out \$35,000 for the packing of supplies and machinery during the past season."

A gentleman, who has recently returned from Dawson, but whose name we have no authority to use, made a statement to the Colonist a few days ago substantially to the same effect as that of Mr. Crockett. Mr. Crockett speaks of two drawbacks, but the two are practically one, for given better facilities for reaching the creeks and the line of the railway and communication has been opened between Pretoria and Delagua Bay, the Transvaal will be ready pacified, except the part actually occupied by Kruger's force, and the doctory subject upon the immediate attention of the City Council.

The mining's despatches show that the advance of our army in the Transvaal is general. Dewet is making in a northeasterly direction so as to join Kruger. Broadwood is close in his rear, and even if Dewet succeeds in joining the Boer forces on their retreat from Middleburg, the addition of his command to the Boer forces would be a very serious situation for Broadwood's force will offset it. On the whole it is a good thing to have Dewet in that part of the country. He is a dashing leader, but can do less harm there than anywhere else.

It is not quite clear what Lord Roberts means by his reference to the 200 Welsh Fusiliers. The implication is that they were released prisoners and probably unarmed, and we are not told whether or not they were captured.

ON BEHALF OF THE GIRLS.

One of the matters that has been brought under the attention of the Women's Council is the desirability of providing for a half-holiday for the girls who attend as clerks in stores. This will commend itself to the public generally. It is a matter which the ladies have largely in their own hands. Most of the girl clerks are engaged in the dry goods stores, and the ladies are the patrons of such establishments. If they express a desire to have employees let the young ladies off for half a day each week, they can likely have their own way about it.

MAILS TO PRINCETON.

Mrs. Anderson, wife of the editor and proprietor of the Similkameen Star, is in the city. Interest attaches to her visit because she is the first person to make the journey from Princeton to Vancouver in a day. Her actual travelling time was a little over twenty-one hours, and a part of this was taken up in waiting for the train at Hope. The chief feature about it is that she rode through from Princeton to Hope in about fourteen hours. The distance is thirty miles, and she made the trip in that time, except when changing horses. She had two mounts sent ahead of her. Mr. Anderson accompanied her a part of the journey, and a gentleman, who had taken the mounts ahead, went with her the rest of the way. The point which we wish to emphasize just now is that to get the mail from Vancouver to Princeton takes over three days. It goes by way of Spence's Bridge. It seems as if the growing business and mining centre of Princeton might, during the summer at least, be served with mail twice a week by way of the Hope Pass.

There is a delegation from the city from Princeton to interview the government on the subject of a highway road across the Hope Mountains, and it is alleged that a pass has been found, which is 1,400 feet lower than that surveyed by the C. P. R. This is a matter that bears looking into, for the construction of a similar highway will open the Similkameen country to traffic directly with the Coast, an effort might well be made to embrace such a road in any general scheme decided upon by the government. Of course, what the Similkameen country needs is a railway to the Coast. This must certainly form a part of any plan which the government may bring down at a future session.

GAME PRESERVATION.

Mr. Alan S. Dumbleton writes us a letter on game preservation. It takes a little courage for any person to move in a matter of this kind, but we are sure that all true sportsmen, and every one who wishes to see the attractiveness of the island maintained, will cordially endorse what he says. We feel it is only too true that the laws for the preservation of game and fish are frequently violated, and the violations do the very injury of which Mr. Dumbleton complains. At present we have on Vancouver Island one of the most attractive fields in the world for sportsmen, either with the rod or the gun. If we can too true that the laws for the preservation of game and fish are frequently violated, and the violations do the very injury of which Mr. Dumbleton complains. At present we have on Vancouver Island one of the most attractive fields in the world for sportsmen, either with the rod or the gun. 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