

# The Colonist.

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 1891.

## A WAR SENSATION.

The Chilean Parliamentary party does not want for courage, enterprise and energy. The Parliamentarians are giving the Dictator, Balmeeda, a lively time of it. He is in possession and has the resources of the Government at his command, but the men who are making a stand for the rights of representative institutions, though in want of almost everything that is required to continue the struggle with any prospect of success, are in good heart and apparently in a condition to keep up the fight for an indefinite time longer. Some of them have found their way to California and have succeeded in placing the United States Government in a rather perplexing and decidedly unpleasant position. Anteasen, apparently a trading vessel, carrying the Chilean flaggated the harbor of San Diego. Then she took in what coal she needed and a large quantity of supplies of different kinds. Her name was the Itata. The suspicions of the authorities were excited with respect to this steamer and information regarding her was sent to Washington. Word came from the capital to seize her and a Deputy Marshal was sent on board of her armed, with the necessary documents.

While the Itata was refitting in San Diego a schooner called the Robert and Minnie was loading with arms and ammunition. The rumor got abroad somehow that there was some connection between the Itata and the Robert and Minnie and another larger vessel that was said to be hovering about the coast. After the schooner had sailed the Marshal received orders to follow her and seize her on the high seas if necessary. So he boarded his steam launch and went in search of her.

In the meantime there appeared to be some unusual stir on board the Itata, and when the Deputy Marshal wanted to see what it was about he was politely invited into the captain's cabin and told very significantly, revolvers and rifles giving emphasis to the communication, that it would be best for this health to remain quietly where he was. The Deputy Marshal, being a sensible man, followed the advice he had received and did not stir. He, however, kept his eyes about him and saw that several steel cannon were taken out of the hold, placed in position on the ship's deck and loaded. The number of men, too, on board increased mysteriously, and when he was escorted to the ship's side by the captain and a guard of armed men, he saw that the steamer had been transformed into a man-of-war. The pilot was on the bridge with a man on each side of him armed with ugly looking revolvers. When near the entrance of the harbor, he was permitted to depart in peace, and the Itata passed him.

When the Marshal came in sight of the Robert and Minnie, she crowded on all the sail she possessed and showed a clean pair of heels. She made good headway when she was overtaken. She then was outside the jurisdiction of the United States, and could afford to take matters easily. There was nothing for the Marshal then to do but to return to San Diego, when he met his unfortunate deputy and found that the Itata had given him the slip. It does not appear that these officials took the escape of the vessels very much to heart. However, they had to inform the authorities in Washington and elsewhere of what had happened, and the result was that the cruiser Charles W. Morgan, which was at Mare Island, was ordered to set out in pursuit of the Itata.

The escape of the Itata resembled, in many respects, the way in which the Alabama eluded the vigilance of the British authorities, during the American civil war. That blunder cost the British nation some twenty millions of dollars, and it is believed that if the Itata does any damage to the shipping of Chile, the United States will be held responsible. At any rate, it is the duty of the United States Government carefully to observe the neutrality law, and not to give aid and comfort to men in rebellion against the Government of Chile. The escape of the Chilean steamer has created quite a stir among our neighbors, and the sensational reporter has been, as usual, busy in giving the facts the needful ornamentation.

## BROTHERHOOD.

A good deal is said, in these days especially, by labor agitators about the brotherhood of man. Much that is said is true and sounds well, but we find that the agitators are not always prepared to carry out their principles. The Chinaman is of course excluded from the "brotherhood," about which so many fine speeches are made. It is utter folly to look upon him and to treat him as a man and a brother. He is ruled out to begin with. The negro is not in many places regarded as one of the family. "He a brother? Not much." This is what was, in effect, said at the national convention of machinists, held in Pittsburgh, Pa., a few days ago. That convention, by a vote of 89 to 29, decided to exclude negro machinists from the association. The Southern states, in which a very large proportion of the population consists of colored people, were largely represented in that convention. This is a little hard on the colored man, who has learned his trade and considers that he has as good a right to work at it in his own country as any man who happens to be born with a white skin. He knows that those who boast that the United States is a free country, in which all men are equal, make an exception against the colored man. This convention of machinists has decided that he is not free in the same sense as the white

man, and, as to his being his equal in any sense, that is absurd. And the machinists only give utterance to the feelings and convictions of white men of all trades and professions in the Southern States. Even in some of the churches the brotherhood of man is denied when fellow

men are asked for the negro. The text which declares that all the nations on the face of the earth are of one blood, in their opinion needs revising bodily. Then there are men who are crying out for social reform, and who condemn in every language the distinctions that are allowed to exist in society, who are ready, to deny not only Chinamen and colored men, but Hungarians, Italians, Poles, and men of many other races and nations, the rights and privileges they demand for themselves. The intolerance, the inconsistency and the pride of race that are everywhere observable would be amusing, if they were not productive of such dreadful results. The brotherhood of man is a noble idea, a humanizing idea, an elevating idea, and it is at the bottom of Christian principle. It is not ten thousand pities that those who profess to believe in it do not try to understand it and act up to it?

## NERDLESS TALK.

The debate of the Address in the Dominion Parliament was not a very edifying one. It was, on the part of the Opposition, more purposeless talk. All the Government and its supporters had to do was to listen and answer the accusations, for the most part foolish and groundless, that were made. The arguments and charges and reproaches of the election campaign were repeated over and over again. There was really nothing new to say. At the Opposition had no amendment to offer, would it not have been better to have had no debate? What was to be gained by fighting the election battle over again on the floor of the House of Commons? Debates on the Address in reality have gone out of fashion in England. They do not facilitate business. Why are they continued in Canada? It was hoped that the session would be a short one. There is not a great deal of business to be done, and there is no reason in the world why it should not be quickly dispatched. But men on the spot, who seem to be impartial, appear to think that the representatives of the people will not pursue this common sense course. The Opposition proper, is not productive of evil consequences. Socialism in Great Britain is not regarded as strong. But socialism, communism, and even anarchism flourish in those countries in which repressive laws exist, and have existed for a long time. In British countries the socialist is looked upon with mild surprise by his acquaintance. Some laugh at him, some scold him, some set him down as a crank, and others shake their heads over him and pronounce the doctrines which he preaches dangerous to society; but no one thinks of meddling with him, and a great many consider him hardly worth reasoning with. He makes very few converts, and those on whom he does make an impression are chiefly sentimental socialists, who do not dream of putting socialistic principles into practice.

In France and Germany, the socialist, if he is at all zealous in propagating his opinions, becomes a kind of hero. His teachings are tabooed, and, in trying to make converts, he runs some risk. We read that stolen waters are sweet, and on something like the same principle there is a charm so many about doctrines and opinions that are condemned by those in authority. This is why repression has helped, and not hindered, the spread of socialistic principles into practice.

Altogether, then, the prospect is that the session, instead of being short and quiet, as was not unreasonably expected, will be long and noisy. But we do not think that the country will be in any way benefited by the long and irritating discussions.

## A PROPOSAL.

Mr. M. C. Cameron has introduced a measure, the object of which is to give men accused of crime the privilege of testifying in their own behalf. It seems to us to be according to the principles of justice to allow the accused person to speak for himself. "What have you got to say for yourself?" is the question that suggests itself to every one who hears a charge of evil-doing made against another. The procedure which prevents the man, against whom the charge is brought, saying all that he can say in reply, and that in the way best calculated to impress those who hear him, appears to us to be unfair and unreasonable. It is objected that if prisoners are placed on the witness stand and sworn, the great majority of them will be sure to perjure themselves. Well, let them do so if they will. If they say what is false it will not be difficult to demonstrate the falsehood of their testimony. The chances are that the clumsy attempts of a guilty man to clear himself will further the ends of justice by making his guilt more easily proved.

If, on the other hand, he is innocent, he, knowing more about his own acts than any one else, may throw a light upon the case that it would be impossible for any mere witness to do. And should not this chance be allowed the man accused of an offence that he did not commit?

It is objected that if this privilege were extended to men charged with crime, there would be a presumption against the man who would decline to avail himself of it. We do not see that there is a great deal of harm in that. Innocent men and women would be so glad of having the chance to tell their own story in their own way, that scarcely one out of a thousand of them would refuse to testify in his own case, and the reason for that one's refusal would be evident that the jury would be prepared to make every allowance for him. The presumption of guilt which the refusal to testify would raise against the man who had committed the crime for which he was tried would not be unfair to him. The object of the trial is not to give him a chance to escape, but to find out whether he is guilty or not. He would have a fair trial, and if there was evidence enough to prove him guilty, the "presumption" would not have any weight one way or the other. If the evidence was defective and not sufficient to bring the crime home to him, he would have to be acquitted in

spite of any impression which his refusal to enter the witness box might make on the minds of the jury.

We are strongly of opinion that the ends of justice would be best served by allowing all accused men to give evidence on oath in their own cases. The time was, when in their own suits, a man could not be a witness in a cause which he was interested, either as plaintiff or defendant. That restriction has been taken away, and much good, and very little harm has been the result. If a man is permitted to testify in his case in which, it may be, only a few dollars are involved, surely, there are stronger reasons for his being allowed the same privilege when his character, his liberty, or his life, is at stake.

## BRITISH LIBERTY.

The difference between liberty in Great Britain and liberty in France and Germany is illustrated by two recent incidents, accounts of which lately appeared in our telegraphic columns. Those accounts tell us that a peasant of Lorraine was arrested, brought before a magistrate and fined, for the serious crime of whistling a tune, which was supposed to be the "Marseillaise," and that Mr. Cunningham Graham, a member of the British Parliament, was ordered to leave France, because some of the speeches he delivered there were adjudged by the authorities to be seditious. Now, in Great Britain, or in any place where British law is in force and the British spirit prevails, men may whistle, play, or sing what tunes they please and, as long as they refrain from overt acts of treason and from inciting men to commit deeds of violence, they may preach all sorts of doctrines, religious, social and political, with perfect impunity. As a matter of fact, in the parks and on the squares and in public halls of London and every other town in the three kingdoms speeches are made in favor of republicanism and every form of socialism without let or hindrance on the part of the authorities. As for whistling and band playing, there is no forbidden music of any kind in the British Empire. There are certain tunes played by Orange men which some Irishmen regard as offensive, and it may be that in a few places and on some days playing them is forbidden, as being calculated to provoke a breach of the peace. But we are not sure that the regulation with regard to "party tunes" is now in force in any part of the British Empire.

This freedom of speech and of action is not productive of evil consequences. Socialism in Great Britain is not regarded as strong. But socialism, communism, and even anarchism flourish in those countries in which repressive laws exist, and have existed for a long time. In British countries the socialist is looked upon with mild surprise by his acquaintance. The prohibition question, the Manitoba school question, the Manicouagan question, the Bank of Canada, the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Canadian party, which took place in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the opening of Victoria Temple for this Province was next referred to the platform and addressed the meeting. She eloquently expounded the duty of Legislatures in adhering closely to Gladstone's motto: "Make it as easy as possible for people to do right, and as difficult as possible for people to do wrong." She eulogized all temperance organizations, dwelling with emphasis upon the juvenile department of the L.O.G.T. She made an excellent speech in support of the miners' strike, which made a deep impression on the minds of their children, both in precept and example. As we listened to her keen arguments in defense of those whose labors are directed towards the development of sound temperance principles in the young, we could not help exclaiming, "God spare her useful life long to be the friend and benefactor of the children!" Miss Laing followed with a well chosen reading, entitled, "What makes hard times?" after which the song "Bring me back to the olden time" was sung. The American officers looked forward to very pleasant times with their brothers of the British Army during their stay in Canada. The writer thinks the proper way would have been to pay the gentleman for his plan and advertise for tenders again.

It is evident there must have been a power behind the throne and a friend at court, for not only was the contract awarded without competition, but a long extension of time given, as the original specification stated that the wagons would be delivered later than the first of May, 1891.

It would be satisfactory if some of our worthy fathers would kindly rise and explain.

FIRE PLAY.

CHILLIWACK I.O.G.T.

## PHILANTHROPIC SCHEMES.

There are two schemes proposed to ameliorate the condition of the persecuted Jews, and to find them a home in which they will be free and happy. The Rothschild proposes to raise a fund to settle the land of their forefathers. It is believed that, if it is skillfully irrigated, Palestine can be made as fertile as ever it was. When the required improvements are made, the Jews who have been so long persecuted in Russia would find the Holy Land a perfect Paradise. The other scheme is that of Baron Hirsch. It is said that he is prepared to give a princely sum to carry the Jews and their effects to the Argentine Republic, or to some other part of South America, where they will settle on the land and enjoy all the advantages that a spindled country holds out to the industrious immigrant and all the rights and privileges of free men.

Either scheme is a noble one, and, if carried out, would be of incalculable benefit to the suffering people. It is to be regretted that these wealthy philanthropists do not unite and work together to improve the condition of the men of their race who are so horribly ill-treated by the Russians. With the resources at their command, they could effect such a change in the condition of the Russian Jews as would almost cause them to bless the oppressors who had moved their large-hearted countrymen to come to their rescue. The Hebrew millionaires could not put their surplus wealth to a better use.

## CIVIC CONTRACTS.

To THE EDITOR.—To a comparative stranger in your city, the curious way in which the City Fathers awarded one of their contracts seems strange. Some time ago an advertisement appeared in the daily papers calling for tenders to build an excise wagon for the Fire Department, to be used in fire-fighting operations.

When the tenders were opened a new plan was adopted, which had been given in by one of the competitors, who had sent in two tenders, one for the Fire Department plan and one for his own, and the contract was given to him at his own offer on his plan.

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(Correspondence of the COLONIST.)

LANGLEY PRADING May 8.—Lila Lodge, I.O.G.T., of this place, held open temple on the above date. At 8:30 Bro. W. J. Henderson, Chief Templar, took the chair and called the meeting to order. After singing the usual opening ode of the Order, Rev. Mr. Misener led in a short prayer. The following programme was then carried out.—Bro. W. S. Livingston, a reading in the Scotch dialect; the song "Evening Star" by members of the Lodge. A reading of "Vigil" (Supplement of June) of Victoria Temple for this Province was next referred to the platform and addressed the meeting. She eloquently expounded the duty of Legislatures in adhering closely to Gladstone's motto: "Make it as easy as possible for people to do right, and as difficult as possible for people to do wrong." She eulogized all temperance organizations, dwelling with emphasis upon the points of view of quality. The wheat crop was struck by a sharp frost on the 1st of May, and the loss was estimated at \$100,000.00. The loss was attributed to the heat over obtained from the sun.

It is to be regretted that the Government will not make any arrangement to place their funds in a number of reliable savings institutions, thus seriously interfering with the business of the commercial banks, and more or less limiting the scope of individual enterprise.

Interest rates of money were at present over 10% in the Savings Banks, whose security led numbers of other people of small means to make use of them. They returned divided into four-and-a-half to five per cent, without any trouble on the part of the depositor, and numbers, other than men of limited means, were to avoid a violation of the law limiting the amount that might be deposited in one bank—so accustomed to place their funds in a number of reliable savings institutions, that the serious interference with the business of the commercial banks, and more or less limiting the scope of individual enterprise.

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