

The Colonist.

FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 1893.

THE OLD MEN'S HOME.

Some of the inmates of the Old Men's Home are very much hurt at what was said about them in the City Council a few days ago by Alderman McTavish. They say that they spent their manhood's days in opening up the Province and in finding out what are its resources. In the early days they endured many hardships and faced many dangers. There were then no means of communication between the different parts of the Province. The pioneers were obliged to carry their tools and their provisions on their backs, and thus loaded, to tramp over rough trails. At the end of the day's journey there was no inn to receive them. They had to cook their coarse food in a rough way, and had often to sleep on the hard ground in the open air without as much as a tent to shelter them from the inclemency of the weather. It was during these long and toilsome journeys that they contracted the rheumatism that is now racking their old bones and unfitting them for active exertion. The spokesman of the pioneers, James McFadden, well known to nearly all the old timers of the province, said that if instead of saying that the inmates of the Old Men's Home are "veterans of the whiskey bottle," Alderman McTavish had said that they were veterans of rheumatism, caught in opening up the country for its present inhabitants, he would have been nearer the truth.

If the majority of the inmates of the Old Men's Home are like James McFadden, men who have worn themselves out in trying to develop the resources of the Province, being at one time fortunate and possessing considerable means which they lost in new ventures, and overtaken at last by old age before they had recovered what they had lost, those who contributed towards establishing a home in which they could be made comfortable during the remainder of their days did a good work. It is not well to be too hard on these stranded old toilers, who did good work in their day, or to enquire too closely into their failings and weaknesses. They are down in their luck, and it was not the habit of the old-time British Columbian to be too inquisitive about the affairs of a comrade who was "strapped," or was too much hurt or too ill to work. It was sufficient for them that he was unlucky and in need of help. They helped him first and talked to him afterwards. But, from what Mr. McFadden says, the great majority of the inmates of the Home are deserving men, who do not require that allowance be made for their weaknesses or their vices. We are quite sure that Alderman McTavish had no idea when he spoke of hurting the feelings of any deserving, but unfortunate, old-timer.

THE GERMAN ELECTION.

The elections took place in Germany yesterday. At the time this article is being written the result is not known, nor is it likely to be known for some time to come. There are a great many candidates in the field, and the candidate in any given district must poll a majority of the votes cast. If no candidate gets a clear majority of the votes polled, there must be a second election. The contest is then between the two candidates that stood first on the poll. It is expected that there will be so many of these second elections that it will not be known how parties stand until after they have been held.

The cause of the dissolution of the Reichstag was its refusal to pass the Government Army bill. This bill provided for a considerable increase of the army and an increase of taxation to provide for its maintenance. The general opinion in Germany seems to be that the army is large enough and the people have to pay as many taxes as they can bear. But the Government has great influence in that country, and no one need feel surprised if the electors at the polls authorize their representatives to accede to the Emperor's demands.

The military establishment of Germany is already immense, but it is not out of proportion to the military establishments of the other great powers of Europe, which have of late years all gone on increasing at an extraordinary rate. Here is a statement compiled by an eminent French journalist, Jacques St. Cere, showing the comparative increase of the armies of Europe during the twenty-four years ending 1892:

	1868	1892
France	1,200,000	1,400,000
Germany	1,200,000	1,400,000
Austria	1,000,000	1,000,000
Italy	750,000	1,000,000
Spain	200,000	250,000
England	200,000	250,000
Turkey	200,000	250,000
Sweden	150,000	150,000
Belgium	150,000	150,000
Portugal	100,000	100,000
Denmark	100,000	100,000
Holland	100,000	100,000
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