

Free Port—Do We Want It?

As in religion so in politics—the up on line, precept upon precept; here a little, there a little. Agitate! agitate! agitate! Some of our readers may possibly have become tired of seeing Free Port in type; but the interests involved in the question we take to be of far too great importance, too closely associated with the wellbeing of this community to warrant silence for fear of annoying the sensibilities of some. In view of the certainty and imminence of great constitutional changes we have, therefore, felt it to be our duty to revert to a subject which has already occupied much of our space, and we would invite the earnest attention of all who have a direct interest in the issue to a few homely and practical reflections. And we would say, in the outset, that the question of the desirability of a Free Port is to be considered in the light of Confederation, and the Dominion Tariff of Customs. Were we called upon to weigh the advantages of a free port as against the advantages of a Customs Tariff framed expressly for this Colony, and, therefore, adapted to its peculiar wants and interests, we are free to confess that we might reach a different conclusion. The verdict would, in all probability, be for the defendant. But such is not the issue before us. Under Confederation the tariff of the Dominion must and will be our tariff. We have no desire to conceal the fact that this proposition is controverted by some persons—we cannot dignify them with the word party, inasmuch as there are but two men in the United Colony, so far as we are aware, who have ventured to assert a doctrine so absurd, and the sincerity of at least one of these we cannot but suspect. All things are said to be fair in time of war. The same principle may be applied to electioneering; yet we are bound to condemn the act of raising a false and deceptive issue upon such a subject at such a juncture. There can really be no question about this. The revenue or Customs laws of the Dominion will unquestionably extend the Dominion over. Insurmountable constitutional and practical obstacles forbid the hope that it can be otherwise. Clause 12 in the schedule of terms of union adopted by the Yale Convention, fully recognizes this: 'At the time of admission, the Revenue Laws of the Dominion of Canada to extend and apply to British Columbia, and thereupon the Revenue Laws of British Columbia to be thereby affected to be null and void, and all Duties and Revenues derived in and from British Columbia under the Revenue Laws of the Dominion of Canada to belong to Canada.' Strange to say, the author of the above section is now endeavouring to make the farmers believe that this Colony can have a special Customs Tariff of its own, under Confederation! We venture to think that few persons can be found verdant enough to believe anything of the kind. They know very well that the customs revenue will at once become Federal revenue, and that the customs laws must be Federal laws—laws which no provincial authorities will ever be permitted to touch. We have thought it our duty to be explicit upon this point, as it is the hinge upon which the question of Free Port turns, and we have reason to believe that an attempt has been made to mislead the farmers and manufacturers with regard to it. The Canadian tariff, then, will become our tariff, so soon as this colony becomes a part of the Dominion. Most of our readers are already familiar with those items in that tariff which bear more directly upon the interests of this colony. Dry goods will be subjected to a duty of 15 per cent., whereas 12½ per cent. is the rate now. Farm produce of every description will be admitted either altogether free or at a merely nominal rate. But there is another law which will follow upon the heels of the Customs tariff, and make a clean sweep of any crumbs of protection that might be left. We allude to a treaty of commercial reciprocity certain to be sooner or later established between the Dominion and the United States. Now, these remarks are made not with a view to creating a prejudice either against Confederation or the laws it will bring with it. So far from that, we can see many and important advantages in Confederation; and it is a great recommendation that the revenue laws which it must impose will be of such a nature as to relieve us of about one-half of that class of taxation which becomes Federal revenue. The reciprocity treaty, too, must be regarded as a boon, rather than an evil, inasmuch as it will throw open a good market at our very door for the staple exports of the Colony. But our object in drawing attention to the bearing that the Canadian tariff, accompanied by a treaty of reciprocity, will have upon the interests of this Colony, is to

demonstrate how much more desirable a free port would be under that dispensation than under the present. The chief objection to Free Port now is that it would deprive the farmers and manufacturers residing within its bounds of protection against foreign competition, a thing they are not yet strong enough to stand; but as this objection will be swept away by the Canadian tariff and reciprocity, it cannot possibly be urged against the policy of a Free Port under Confederation. The farmers 'cannot have their cake and eat it.' The choice is not between free port and protection; but, shall we have Confederation without both? Unable to retain protection under Confederation, shall we secure the advantages which a Free Port offers, when no sacrifice has to be made for it? This is really the true issue. These are the questions to which farmers and merchants, mechanics and manufacturers are called upon to return a practical answer. Regarding the question from a commercial point of view, one would scarcely be justified in assuming that two opinions could possibly exist in intelligent minds. Indeed, when the prospective development on the immediate south of us is considered, and when it is borne in mind that the Canadian tariff puts the duty on the very class of goods which would enter most largely into our foreign trade—up to 15 per cent. instead of down to 5 per cent., as proposed by the Tariff Commission, a free port under Confederation would appear to be an indispensable condition to the commercial success of Victoria. We earnestly invite a careful and candid consideration of this whole subject, and we would again warn those whose interests appear to demand protection to avoid the mistake of imagining that they are called upon to make a choice between protection and free port. Confederation, immediate Confederation is inevitable. Protection you cannot have under Confederation. Would it not, then, be your true interest (we address the farmers on this island especially) to secure the advantages which a free port offers, viz., the building up of a great commercial and manufacturing city, with a large consuming capacity, presenting a good market in which to buy and sell? There can be but one intelligent answer.

Royalty "Running the Slides."

His Royal Highness Prince Arthur has been performing the feat of "running the slides," at Hull, immediately above Ottawa. As the phrase is a localism, unfamiliar to most of our readers a brief description of the exploit, and its accompaniments may not prove altogether devoid of interest. The slides are inclined plains, constructed of wood, and designed to ease timber over precipitous falls which occur in the river, and where the logs would otherwise stick and form what is called "a jam." The slides in question form a channel about thirty feet wide, with high wooden walls on either side, and the bottom so inclined as to give a fall of forty feet in six hundred. Of course the large body of water rushes down this declivity with fearful impetuosity. Nor is the descent regular, the current taking five distinct leaps from three to six feet in height, giving it anything but a tame appearance to the uninitiated, as the water boils and leaps on its downward career. The "cribs," as they are technically called, are nothing more nor less than a number of logs of square timber, from twenty to forty feet in length, joined together by means of transverse timbers (or "traverses" as they are called) to which the square logs are fastened either by means of wooden bolts or, as is commonly the case, by "withes," or twisted saplings. These cribs are generally about twenty-six feet in width, leaving two feet to spare on either side, in passing through the slides. It is in cribs thus constructed that the timber, (pine, oak and elm) for some time the staple export of Canada, is conducted down the more rapid and unnavigable rivers, first of all having been, in most instances, floated down the small creeks and tributaries to these rivers in single logs. When these cribs reach the broader waters of the lower Ottawa or the St. Lawrence they are connected together and formed into what are termed "rafts," in which form they run the larger and still more terrific rapids of the St. Lawrence, and ultimately find their way to Quebec, whence the timber is shipped to England and elsewhere. It was upon one of these "cribs" that Prince Arthur "ran the slides," above Ottawa city, on the 12th ultimo. But there were some annual features about the "Royal Crib." A flooring raised about two feet, kept the royal feet clear of damp. The crib was beautifully decorated with flags, flowers and evergreens and had an arch on it. Three splendid easy chairs were set upon the floor, a portion of which was richly carpeted, so that the royal feet might not come in contact with the boards which composed the floor. These were novelties to the hardy lumbermen who thronged the sides of the river, which they showed some disposition to regard as an unjustifiable inno-

vation. There were two of these "cribs." On the first went His Royal Highness, accompanied by Sir John and Lady Young. Sir John is said to have manifested some little trepidation, not on his own account, but for Lady Young, who he appeared to think would be as well on shore. Not so thought Lady Young, however. Her curiosity and spirit of adventure were fairly awakened, and she was determined to make the strange passage. The crib was unmoored and moved onward, slowly at first, but increasing its speed as it neared the seething current, and was soon leaping into the vortices in reckless haste. The three bridges under which it passed were gaily decorated, and crowded with people, and more than one bouquet of flowers was dropped upon the royal crib as it passed. A few minutes of thrilling excitement and both cribs floated in the placid waters beneath. Hear the party beheld for the first time and with surprise two more cribs. One was moored out in the middle of the river, and was tastefully ornamented, and spread out on it was a substantial luncheon, prepared for the intrepid navigators. A short wry off was the other, without ornament, occupied by lumbermen. In the centre blazed a great wood-fire, on which were placed immense pots, containing the pork and pea-soup. Plates of this soup came to the royal table, and it was sipped and praised by royal lips. It is thought pea-soup will be all the rage throughout the Dominion.

Thursday Nov 11 The Langford Lake Murder.

Patrik Fowler, late proprietor of the Goldstream House, was brought before the Police Magistrate for examination upon a charge of being concerned in the murder of Joseph Baker, a Leech River miner, while the latter was on his way to Victoria with a bag of gold dust in his possession. The deposition of officer McMillan, which was read, is as follows:

On or about the 14th day of December, 1868, a man named Joseph Baker, a miner at Leech River, I am informed, left the said river on his way to Victoria in the Colony aforesaid, and called at the house of a man named Patrik Fowler, situated at Goldstream, about 11 miles distant from Victoria; from thence he started again, in company with the said Patrik Fowler and another man named Leonard, commonly known as 'Butch,' and when at a distance of about a mile and a half from the house of the said Patrik Fowler they parted company, the said Patrik Fowler and Leonard returning to Fowler's house; since that time the said Joseph Baker has not been seen alive or in any way heard of; on the 19th of August last past, the remains of a human being were found in a small pool on Langford Plains, about two miles from the said Patrik Fowler's house, and about half a mile from the place where Joseph Baker parted company with the said Patrik Fowler and Leonard, alias 'Butch'; some clothes were also found which were identified as those of the said Joseph Baker. I have reason to believe, and do believe, that the remains so found were those of the said Joseph Baker, and that he was murdered by some person or persons at present unknown. Yesterday, the 9th of November, instant, I was in company with Inspector Bowden when the prisoner, Patrik Fowler, was arrested as he was about to leave the Colony on the steamer Wilson G. Hunt. From information I have received I have reason to believe and do believe that the said Patrik Fowler was concerned in the wilful murder of the said Joseph Baker, and I charge him accordingly.

Mr. Bishop appeared for the defence and stated that Fowler owned property on the American side as well as here; he had a family in Washington Territory, and was about to visit them when arrested. His client was not flying from justice, and although he had sold his place he had still a claim upon it, as he had not been paid in full. The Magistrate said the case was one which demanded the strictest investigation. The prisoner was the last person who saw the deceased alive, and the officer had done precisely what he ought to have done in laying the information.

Mr. Bishop said the prisoner was not the last person who had seen the deceased. There was another man with him. The prisoner was remanded until Monday next. NEW WESTMINSTER ITEMS.—Peter, the Indian condemned for the murder of Murphy in 1861, has published a card in the local paper denying the statement that he confessed having committed the crime, and making a final declaration of his complete innocence. In the case of Stamp vs. B. C. & V. I. Mill Co., Chief Justice Begbie sustained the decision of Chief Justice Neidham in refusing to grant an injunction on application of defendants; so that the plaintiff is entitled to enter up judgment and take possession, but he is restrained from selling for a period of 28 days, to permit of communication being had with the Company in England. On Monday James Cooper, a shoemaker employed in Mr. Johnston's establishment, died suddenly of paralysis.

An Indian brought a good prospect of gold from Pitt River. He states that he obtained it in a small stream, on the north side of the river, and has offered to conduct a party thither. The affair caused a good deal of interest, and a party were preparing to start out.

The Races.

A beautiful, springlike morning was succeeded yesterday afternoon by a raw wind from the northeast and a cloudy sky, which deterred many from visiting Beacon Hill course. The attendance, however, was large and the races passed off satisfactorily. For the Trial Stakes four horses were entered. The race was won by Lascelles' bay horse White Stockings. For the Prince of Wales' Plate, Fitzpatrick's roan horse Antelope and Lascelles' grey horse Greyhound contested, Greyhound started off ahead and maintained the lead through-out the two miles, winning easily. For the Hurdle Race, two miles with six flights of hurdles, Gerow's Royal Charlie, Sandover's Buttons and Harris' Royal Bill ran. Royal Charlie led off, and all the horses took the first and second hurdles beautifully. At the third hurdle Buttons lunked and was withdrawn, and Charlie and Bill finished the race. Charlie cleared all the hurdles beautifully, while Bill appeared to hesitate before making each leap, thus losing ground which he vainly endeavored to regain between the flights. Charlie won after a sharp struggle. The Naval Plate of \$50, added to a sweepstake of \$2 each, 1 mile, ridden by Officers of the Royal Navy, was the most interesting race of the day. The following horses were entered: Blue Dick, ridden by Lt. Holbeck; Ose, an Irish ridden by Commander Egerton; Yorick, ridden by Mr. Stewart; Joe Lane, ridden by Mr. Harbord; Soiled Dove, ridden by Lieut Thomas; Birdie, ridden by Mr. Messon. The horses had a bad start, Ose an last leading. In ascending the first slight rise, Yorick made a dash and swept by all the others, but he soon went all behind; the rider of Joe Lane lost his stirrup at starting and was thrown at a spot 200 yards beyond the Judge's stand, escaping without severe injury. At the last quarter Ose an last was ahead. He was closely pressed by Soiled Dove, but won the race by two or three lengths. The Blue Jacket Plate was carried off by a sailor of the Charybdis, who rode Royal Bill. The Scary Stakes were won by Snatcher Boy.

THE CIRCUS.—THE CANTAS REST AND BLOWN DOWN.—GREAT CONFUSION.—NORDBY HUNT.—Last evening the Great World circus was filled to its utmost capacity. There were old and young, rich and poor, the grave, the gay, the frivolous the severe—all gathered in a heterogeneous mass to behold the unfolding of Wilson's repertoire. Shortly before dark the wind set in stiffly from the northeast and continued in fitful gusts, increasing steadily in strength until 8½ o'clock, when it assumed the respectable proportions of a gale, and swept down upon the city like a demon in season of prey. Of course it is not to be supposed that when the winds their revels keep so prominent an object as a huge circus-tent densely packed with humans is likely to escape their observation; and so it proved with the Great World Circus. After flapping its great roof and sides for all the night like a huge bird preparing to rise, crack!, the top parted just over the dress circle with a report like a distant roll of musketry. The trained ponies were being put through their paces at the moment, and although the audience betrayed some uneasiness no one withdrew and the performance proceeded for a few moments when, up! and away went another breadth of the canvas on the south side, and out went most of the lights. A few of the audience withdrew at this point, but the remainder kept their seats; and ground and lofty tumbling commenced. This had proceeded but a few moments when another and another great rent appeared, and the loose ends of the canvas flapped most unpleasantly about the ears of the inmates. The manager here announced that the lions would be shown; but the howling of the storm, which would have drowned the roaring of ten thousand lions, so affrighted the greater portion of the audience that they rushed pell-mell towards the entrance to escape. At this moment the east side of the tent blew in, followed shortly by the great pole or mast in the centre, which settled down so easily and gracefully that not a person was even scratched. The fall of the pole brought the canvas down upon some 400 persons who still remained within, and who, when they had recovered from their surprise, scrambled out and went laughing home. The damage to the tent is slight and the whole affair assumed much more of a ludicrous than of an alarming character. The canvas will be repaired in time for the matinee, which will come off if not interdicted by the clerk of the weather.

KOOTENAY.—Dr. Bronson, who arrived by the Enterprise last evening, has just come from Kootenay. He left the mines on the 21st ult., but has nothing of importance to add to previous advices. The weather continued pleasant. The bottoming of the deep shaft on Perry creek, already announced, resulted in a prospect of about forty dollars on the bed-rock. The shaft has been hoisted in and arrangements made for working the claim through the winter. Increased confidence in the existence of rich and extensive diggings has resulted from these operations. In the Armstrong claim excellent prospects, as much as \$8 to the pan, had also been obtained. Operations on Wild Horse creek had assumed no new feature. On Weaver creek several claims were paying well. The markets were well supplied with goods and provisions, and it is thought there will be no scarcity although the number wintering in that country will be larger than usual.

GRAND MATINEE.—Yielding to the request of numerous heads of families, Mr. Wilson will give a grand matinee performance at his circus this afternoon, commencing at 3 o'clock. A full programme will be gone through with, including Lambert in the lion's den. In view of the uncertain state of the weather and the probable departure of the Active for San Francisco to-morrow, no other opportunity will be afforded the little ones to witness the wonderful performances of the great troupe. We advise all who intend going at all to go this afternoon.

POTATOES are selling at 12½ cents a bushel in the prosperous American State of Iowa. Here the farmers can't get rich at \$1 per bushel. Poor fellows!

CARIBOO NEWS.—We have the Sentinel of the 30th Oct. W. W. Hill, an old resident of Barkerville, died at Cottonwood on the 23d October. He was a Mason and was buried by the Cariboo Lodge. Great indignation is expressed at the hoggish course of the Peace River prospectors, who were fitted out by Government and private subscriptions. It is now said they brought back \$18,000 in dust, and that they have taken several friends with them to the new placers. An application by the party to the Gold Commissioner to be allowed to pre-empt claims larger than the usual size was refused by Commissioner Brew. The Government and the people are entitled to know the results of the exploration and the prospectors have acted in very bad faith with their employers. On William Creek the hydraulic claims have suspended operations for the season. The claims on Stout Gulch, Conklin Gulch and Lightning Creek maintain their reputation for richness.

Upon the invitation of Capt. Lyons and officers of H. M. Fleet, about 200 ladies and gentlemen attended a ball at Alhambra Hall on the evening of the Prince of Wales' Birthday. The gaudy entertainers were present in large number, and were unwearied in attentions to their guests, who passed several hours very agreeably. The party broke up about 3 o'clock yesterday morning. During the evening a beautiful collation was spread for the refreshment of the guests.

FROM NEW WESTMINSTER.—The steamer Enterprise, Capt. Swanson, returned from the river at 5 o'clock last evening. She brought Barnard's Cariboo Express, 200 lbs salmon, ten bushels cranberries and 61 passengers. Amongst the passengers we observed Mr. Jones, of the Bank of British Columbia to Cariboo, Mr. Holloway, of the Sentinel, Dr. Bronson and Mrs. Bronson of Yale, and Mr. Franklin, of New Westminster. There was no Bank treasure this trip, but about \$12,000 in private hands.

TWO GRAND-GIT ENTERTAINMENTS.—Morey will not perform again until Saturday afternoon, when there will be a gilt matinee for families, the leading prize to which will be a handsome China tea set. On Saturday evening the Professor will appear again, and will present as his leading gift a silver tea service of six pieces.

ON DIT.—That Mr. Barnard has received a very pressing invitation to allow himself to be put in nomination for the Yale-Lytton District and that he has consented to stand. We hope the rumor may prove to be correct, as Mr. Barnard would make a useful member.

AS COWICHAN.—Mr. James Lowe is at Cowichan, where we presume Mr. DeCosmos also is. Mr. Lowe has decided the advantage of his opinion in having issued a written address. A speech may be altered to suit the locality in which it is delivered; but a written address pins the candidate immovably to his pledges.

THE steamer Newbern ran ashore near Toogas in coming down and lost her fore-foot. She will be repaired at San Francisco. On the way up she ran on a reef but floated off at high tide without damage.

PEACE RIVER GOLD.—A gentleman who arrived on the Enterprise last evening brought ten ounces of Peace River gold, which may be seen to-day at the store of Millard & Beedy, Wharf street.

A TERROR TO ROGERS.—Charles Clark for obtaining money under false pretences, was yesterday sent to the obaingang for three months.

THE Cape Fox Indians, who robbed the sloop Minnie of Victoria, a few weeks ago, have been captured by Gen. Davis, U. S. A., and taken to Sitka for trial.

IN TOWN.—Mrs. Fanny Morgan Phelps is former days a great favorite with Victoria theatre-goers, arrived in town by the Wilson G. Hunt.

Confederation with Terms.

VICTORIA, Nov. 10, 1869. EDITOR BRITISH COLONIST.—I notice in your yesterday's issue a letter headed 'Vox Populi,' to which I beg to take exception. First, I entirely agree with you—though myself as well known, not an ardent Confederationist—but that it is time and high time to speak out now that Confederation is inevitable, and make known our terms. We may get our own terms by speaking plainly, firmly and unanimously at once. It is extremely improbable that we shall be asked the question by the other party to the compact; it would be folly to wait to see. The Municipal elections now being over, something must be done.

Now, to reply to 'Vox Populi.' He calls to remembrance, as who might please to remember the 5th of November, '68, 'the great meeting' held in the theatre, 29th of January, A. D. 1868; and the works of the famous committee following—appointed, not as 'Vox Populi' says, 'to take such action as they might deem proper to further the object of union.' They were appointed, no doubt, with powers within sensible bounds, but to arrogate to themselves the right, as they undoubtedly did, and absconded the community by doing, of corresponding with the Government of Canada; the latter considering themselves properly authorized, communicating at once with the Imperial authorities; for all this, I repeat, the community have not forgotten.

Louis XIV. on a certain occasion said—'France, I am France!' The assertion has been always considered sublime for its audacity; but the conduct detailed under the teaching of 'Vox Populi' most certainly savors of the ridiculous and more nearly resembles the strut of the three celebrated tailors who spoke for all England. To conclude, let us have terms by all means, and make them at once, and negotiate as you detail through a constituted and responsible channel. E. M.

The Water Q...

It would be a grave... be a fatal one, to perm... to be diverted from the... ject of a water supply... nity by the present ra... any desire to borrow... pears results, it would... height of thoughtless... forget that the rainy... followed by the dry... as winter is succeeded... that the same conditi... stoned so much conce... ent rains set it, are c... created another year, p... sified form. Such wa... would only be equal... postponing action un... cuts off the present m... should be borne in m... of providing an u... wholesome water is o... volve a large outlay... derable time; and... aware that the subje... ply is one less lik... general interest at... windows of heaven a... aqueous element is be... in great abundance, f... pond, and streamlet... been a fortnight ag... family became the s... solitude as to where t... water was to come fro... ture to urge this sa... water supply upon... now. It is no secu... tain whence the sup... been gradually faili... and it is scarcely to... will continue to dim... supply will be ven... year than it has been... ent. Now, surely... necessary to direct t... the prospect thus pr... secure for the sub... thought and practical... importance demand... which has just cloed... kable for the ab-enc... we have only to mag... small-pond, or any... which the community... picture to ourselves... proaching its height... wholesome water giv... realize the threaten... and death; add to... back-ground to the p... tion, and the mind w... grade degree, realize... doom of this otherw... We need not dwell u... that exists of havin... of good, wholesome... render a city situat... reasonably free from... to be necessary to pol... expecting to retain t... tion, much less attra... as a limited and pic... execrable water meet... These we take to be... obvious to require... The great object of... is to urge the impo... action. It will prob... to have a Bill pass... legislature for the pu... capital necessary to... supply of water. Last... that object in view... few days before the... The Bill was so long... and there appeared t... as to whether the r... were in favour of the... measure or not that... option left to the Leg... don it. This much we... body most unwarrant... aqueous and flatulen... place. The consequ... serious should a si... make this year. If it... for power to bring... Lake, or, indeed, fro... intended to bring a... ary survey should b... introduction of the... rate-payers may kn... about, and the Leg... in possession of such... it to deal properly a... a measure of such v... whole community. All... at once, and a prop... provision endorsed b... should be carefully p... admit of its introduc... part of the session... ties would be the p... this matter in hand... earnestly appeal to... Council to discharge... respect and thus v... sibility which w... tach to them, shoul... a dereliction of duty... tute by far the m... which will devolve u... oil, and it would be... at once and in earne...