The Colonist

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The Daily Colonist.

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WHO LAUGHS LAST.

In a mood of not unnatural, if short-sighted jubilation over the triumphant return of Mr. Prefontaine, the Times remarks that "a minister has been dismissed for advocating a policy not in accord with the principles of the party as a whole." It does not, however, emphasize the fact that a minister has been elected who advocates precisely the same policy as did the minister who was dismissed, and who would not have been acceptable to the electors of his constituency if he had not advocated such a policy. Mr. Prefontaine's advocacy of protection may be less sincere, less outspoken, more tactful than Mr. Tarte's, but whatever he may say after his election there can be no question about his declarations and attitude before it. The weakness of the Liberal party lies not in the number of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's followers in parliament, nor in the majorities by which Liberal cabinet ministers are returned in the country, but in the differences of doctrine by which the Liberal party is divided against itself. The main difference is not on a minor point upon which the adherents of a party may agree to differ, but upon the cardinal issue in Canadian politics at the present time, the question of the tariff. So long as the government can steer clear of the tariff issue it is as strong as need be. As soon as it is compelled to face this issue its apparent strength disappears. Suppose we acquit Mr. Tarte of being actuated by any large measure of patriotism or honesty of purpose, we are the more unable to imagine him as totally devoid of political worldly wisdom. He foresaw that compromise upon the tariff could not long remain a possibility, and he acted accordingly. He withdrew the curtain which shrouds the inner councils of the government, and showed the party riven in two by an irreconcilable difference of opinion. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has drawn the curtain again, but he has not mended the rent, and with all his genius he cannot mend the rent. It is the fashion now for the government press to declare that Mr. Tarte is a totally discredited individual. Very likely he is. But the true point is whether his doctrine upon the questions of tariff and transportation is a totally discredited doctrine. It is all very well for the Liberal press to publish fatuous editorials reflecting an indefinite free trade sentiment, which it is ready at any moment to reconcile with any measure of protection which the government sees fit to sanction or introduce. But how long are the people of Canada going to stand that sort of thing, how long is the Liberal party itself going to stand it? There are scores of Liberals in Victoria alone who openly declare themselves followers of Laurier, but believers in the principles of Tarte. It is quite obvious that as soon as the government has to face the issue upon which the party itself is so divided, its boasted strength must vanish. Conservatives are not uneasy over a bye-election here or there. They are united shoulder to shoulder upon a definite policy, which they understand, and which they believe the country needs and desires. They know that when the battle is joined upon the real issue the victory is certain.

Piles To prove to you that Dr. Chase's Ointment is a certain and absolute cure for each and every form of itching, bleeding and protruding piles, we manufacturers have guaranteed it. See testimonials in the daily press and ask your neighbors what they think of it. Any one can use it and get their money back if not cured. 60c a box, at all dealers or EDMANSON, BATES & CO., Toronto.

Dr. Chase's Ointment

A QUEER OPPOSITION.

Condolences are certainly due to Mr. McBride as leader of a faction in the legislature sufficiently pretentious to call itself "the opposition" as distinguished from the other oppositions in existence there. In three constituencies he has not been able to put one supporter in the field. He has not found a man either in North Nanaimo, North Victoria or West Yale, to enter the field with the simple statement that he is a follower of Mr. Richard McBride. There are plenty of people anxious to defeat and discredit the government, there are always people ready to oppose anything active and progressive. But there they stop. They wish to defeat the government, but there is nothing to be put in its place which they are willing to agree to support. This may well make the people of the country pause. When there is a recognized opposition with a declared policy, then the people can make a choice between the government and the opposition. But at the present time there is no organized opposition to the government and its policy. There are a number of individuals who do not like the government, and who for that reason are trying hard to prejudice the mind of the people against its policy. But they are in no agreement between themselves as to any one thing which should be done. What, then? A vote against the government candidate in any constituency is a vote for anarchy, or no government at all. We do not mean that opponents of the government are anarchists, but that they are disordered and unsettled units without any possibility of that cohesion among themselves which is the first condition of any government whatsoever.

A WELCOME WAVE.

Our good friend Henry Clews reports that "the crest of the boom seems to have passed from the East across the Appalachians, and is now under full headway for the Pacific Coast." This appeals to us as a rather more eloquent sentence than is usual in a financial circular. The information it contains is also gratifying in the highest degree. There has been such a boom in manufacturing concerns, and mergers, and trusts, and so forth, for the last few years, that capital and enterprise have been withdrawn from the exploitation of these natural products which are the mainstay of the West. So long as an ingenious and enterprising gentleman could make a million dollars by combining a soda water fountain and ice-cream barrow, and a fruit stall, why should the resources of the West receive any attention? There seems to be a continual oscillation between activity in the development of new resources, and activity in manufacturing. The latter appears to follow the former, and just so soon as manufacturing languishes, development revives. After all, if we look closely into the nature of things, we see a reasonableness in this. The development of natural resources produces a large increment of wealth in a rich, new country. This in its turn creates a demand for the articles which this wealth can buy, and consequent expansion of manufactures. So that the free capital of a country swings in this way from East to West and from West to East. Observe that we do not refer, and neither presumably does Mr. Henry Clews, to the prosperity which results from active employment for everybody at good prices and good wages, for that the West has enjoyed and is enjoying at the present time; but to a fresh flood of enterprise and development by means of new capital, intercepted for some time past by the extraordinary opportunities for its profitable employment presented in the East.

THE NEW LOAN.

The News-Advertiser of Vancouver published last Friday a long article dealing with the new provincial loan. The attitude taken by the News-Advertiser towards the credit of the province is that it has fallen through extravagance and incompetence on the part of the government. The general level of the prices of investment stocks has fallen. The price of British Columbia stock does not appear to have fallen more than that of other securities of the same character. We have before us an article from a London financial paper, which is devoted to showing, not that the general level of prices has declined within the last three years, for that is a fact too obvious to require proof, but that it has not yet recovered from the severe fall which occurred during the summer, to the level of even last May. It says:

Coming back, however, to the question of the so-called advance, what do we find? In nearly every case, and with nearly every class of good investment security, the prices of six months ago—and this particular date is taken because the interest conditions will be similar—were higher than they are now after the alleged advance. Take local loans stock. The mean price then, that is in the middle of May, was 101½; L. C. C. stock was 102, Manchester three per cent. stock was 100, and Colonial loans were distinctly higher. Coming to railway debentures, it is the same thing. Caledonian four per cent. were 134½, or 2 points better than at present; Great Eastern fours were 3 points higher, Great Northern threes 2 points, Great Western fours and North-Western threes 4 points, Brighton four and a half per cent. Perpetual and North-Eastern threes 2 points, and South-Western Consolidated threes 2½ points; these figures being below the highest quotations of the year, which, of themselves, were very much below the best of last year—a year of war and trouble.

A similar state of things is shown in railway preference stocks, where at least one would expect to find some reflection of the recovery in the ordinary stocks. Instead of this, we see that North-Western four per cent. preference stock, now at 127½, was 130½ six months ago, the extreme prices this year being 136 highest and 125 lowest, so that the advance from the very lowest is a bare 2½, or little more than would be accounted for by the accrued interest. Great Eastern four per cent. preference is 4½ points lower and 2½ points above the worst, while Great Western five per cent. stock is still 5 points lower, North-Western four per cent. 3 points, South-Western four per cent. 4 points, and North-Eastern, Midland and Lancashire and Yorkshire 2. Brighton five per cent. are now only 1 point lower than in May, and 3½ points above the lowest but 5½ points below the best of last year. Even the annuities of the East India railway show the same depression, being now quoted 2⅞ instead of 24, the three per cent. debenture stock being two points lower than it was, and at about the lowest; and it is the same with G. I. P. railway four per cent. debenture stock. It would seem from this that the value of investment money is at a very low standard, and that such recovery as may have taken place does little more than reflect the natural advance through the accretion of interest.

These then are the conditions under which the province has been obliged to borrow money, if it would borrow it at all. They are unfavorable conditions, but there is no reason to imagine that the internal political conditions of British Columbia have made them specially unfavorable towards this province. The News-Advertiser compares the new provincial loan with the new Natal loan, with the inference that the latter has been much more successful than the former. As to that point the London Times, speaks of "the very moderate success of the Natal and British Columbia new loans" placing both on a footing of equality. In fact we have yet to see any expression of opinion in the English press than British Columbia's credit has been injured by conditions prevalent in or action taken by British Columbia. If such an injury had been done it would be expressed in the attitude of London financiers and their attitude could hardly fail of being reflected in the press. It is left to newspapers in British Columbia to make this accusation. But as these newspapers are influenced by political motives their opinion upon such a subject is not worth having. The British Columbia Review describes the result of the new loan as follows:

The new British Columbia government loan was not a success, only 20 per cent. of the £720,000 offered being subscribed by the public. This is unfortunate, especially as the loan was withheld some months ago because the monetary conditions then were not considered favorable to the issue. On the present occasion the failure is not because any objection could be taken to the loan in view of the purpose for which it was intended to employ the money, or that the price of issue was too dear. Natal, which appealed to the investor at the same time, has fared little better, and several other government and municipal issues have not resulted in an unqualified success, so that there is only one inference to be drawn, and that is that the war has temporarily straitened the means of this country, which for the time being appears to have had a sufficiency of sterling investments. We regret the ill-fortune of the province, the more because if good loans are not a success, what inducement is there to float industrial undertakings? Possibly with the advent of the New Year capital will become more plentiful and less timid.

GREAT BRITAIN AND GERMANY.

The visit of the German Emperor to Great Britain has shown the feeling of hostility between the two peoples to be deep seated and lasting. The reception of the Emperor in England was decidedly cool. As the King's nephew, people were glad to see him, but to the representative of Germany, they indulged in no warmth of welcome whatever. On the other hand, he has been openly declared to have lost all his popularity in Germany by his action in visiting Great Britain. The cause of the estrangement between the two countries is deepseated, much more deepseated than an outburst of sentimental enthusiasm over the Boer cause would lead us to believe. Germany, an artificial union of States, burdened by a huge military organization affecting the time, money and morals of the people, with a medieval aristocracy at one end of society and its counterpart in anarchical socialism at the other, imagined that in a few years it could become a world power in commerce and dominion, and could rival the glories of the British Empire, the slow spontaneous growth of a free people. Germany is now beginning to find out that the task is an impossible one. Germany has begun too late. There is no room for the expansion of the race. Every German who leaves Germany becomes absorbed in Anglo-Saxon civilization. If he does not, his children do. It is all the same. One generation is nothing. It is the coming generations which count. Industrial civilization has conquered the world. It is now amplifying the conquest. But the essential crisis is over. No matter how Germany strives and agonizes, she finds herself in the end the handmaiden of Anglo-Saxon civilization and Anglo-Saxon commercial predominance. Germany imagined that the great collection of nations, known as the British Empire, was ripe for dissolution, and that the Boer war was its parting knell. In the resulting chaos she expected to find equality of opportunity. From this ill-natured but not unnatural dream she has awakened to find her rival engulphing the Boers as well as conquering their country. The agents for the destruction of the British Empire have become agents for its preservation and extension. This irresistible power has been brought sadly home to German imagination. It has scattered the rosate dreams of Germany and can only breed venom and hatred in her mind until her ambition has been killed through the realization of its futility.

THE YUKON ELECTION.

One Lot was not sufficient to save the Cities of the Plain, but one Ross has been sufficient to save the administration of the Yukon by the present government. From this it might either be argued that Ross is a much holier man than Lot, or that the administration of the Yukon has not been so bad as Sodom and Gomorrah. The campaign made for Mr. Ross, openly and unblushingly, was that as member he could leaven the administration of the Territory with the virtues of his own personality; whereas, an opponent of the government could only expose its vices. It is an immense tribute, and we believe not an unmerited tribute, to the character of Mr. Ross, that such a campaign was entirely successful. We hope that the personal rectitude and honesty of purpose which have stood him in stead with the electors of the Yukon, will stand him in stead in his stewardship of their interests; and that his personality which served to hide the government during the campaign will serve to restrain it in the hour of victory. We pointed out some time ago that the inference drawn from his victory would not be the logical conclusion from the arguments used in support of his candidature. He was put before the electorate, justly enough, as a man who had stood up to the government in defence of an unrepresented and otherwise defenceless people. The people of the Yukon are now more defenceless than they were before, if Mr. Ross' victory is heralded as a condonation of all that has taken place. If he so accepts it himself, he will merely fall before one of those subtle temptations which prey specially upon the minds of representatives, but from which the minds of officials are comparatively free. His career as representative of the Yukon will be watched with interest in any event, and with deep and unqualified admiration if he succeeds in moulding the policy of the administration in the directions desired by his constituents.

VALE MONROE.

The Monroe doctrine was suggested and outlined by a British statesman as a means of saddling upon the United States the responsibilities of its position, and of relieving Great Britain from the possibility of future embarrassments in the Western Hemisphere. For a great many years the Monroe doctrine slumbered as peacefully as its author. Suddenly it was revived. The occasion none of us is likely to forget. There is an exceedingly impertinent, irresponsible and degraded republic in South America called Venezuela, whose territory adjoins some of the possessions of the British Empire. A dispute over the boundary arose. Great Britain was proceeding to reduce Venezuela to a frame of mind in which a sane country could negotiate when the United States intervened. Whether that intervention was justifiable or not is a moot point; there is, however, a general agreement that the manner of it was offensive beyond measure and calculated to disturb the relations between two friendly countries. President Cleveland's message pleased a certain section of the American republic, it irritated a certain section of the British public, but it left the main body of the two peoples dismayed at its possible results and anxious only to avert them. All serious results were happily averted, and the Monroe doctrine relegated to its proper sphere as the ornamental adjunct of political platforms. One effect, however, of the attitude of the United States at that time was overlooked, its effect upon Venezuela. If a strong man protects a cowardly thief, and yet permits his protege to resume his courses without restraint, that strong man becomes vicariously a cowardly thief also. Venezuela has a very dim perception of national honor and probity. We are inclined to think that Venezuela regarded the Monroe doctrine as a convenient shield under which to practise all kinds of knavery in international relations. If Venezuela did not think that at the last moment the United States would intervene, it is difficult to understand the mixture of impertinence and dishonesty with which Great Britain and Germany have been treated by that ridiculous republic. The United States has not intervened, and apparently does not intend to intervene. The only way in which the United States could intervene would be by assuming the financial liabilities repudiated by Venezuela, unless, indeed, the Monroe doctrine was to be used to transform South America into an even greater and more perfect paradise of rogues than it is at present. Such an intervention would have involved the United States in responsibilities of a very serious character, and would have set a precedent which other South American republics would be only too ready to act upon when financial embarrassment followed up lawlessness and disorder. As suzerain of South America, the United States would enter upon a most uneuviable heritage of discomfort. So the United States has not interfered, and Great Britain and Germany are free to deal with Venezuela as best suits their ideas of just compensation. The whole matter amounts to this, that the United States was willing enough to exercise the prerogative contained in the Monroe doctrine, but is decidedly unwilling to assume the responsibilities involved in every prerogative. To bid Great Britain in a grandiose manner to leave Venezuela alone is one thing, and to take the responsibility of making Venezuela observe the ordinary conventions of international morality, is entirely a different matter. The United States enjoyed the one, but declines the other. The interpretation placed upon the Monroe doctrine by the average American newspaper is evidently not the interpretation placed upon it by the government of the United States. We hope the latter is more closely in accordance with the canons of common sense, and that nothing will happen in connection with the Venezuelan incident to complicate the amicable relations existing between the great Empire and the great Republic.

PROHIBITION.

In the Mowat plebiscite of 1894 the prohibitionist vote was 180,187 male voters; in the Laurier plebiscite of 1898 the prohibition ballots counted numbered but 154,485. The plebiscite recently taken brought 150,576 prohibitionists to the polls. On this last occasion very few opposed to prohibition took the trouble to vote. It was necessary for the prohibitionists to poll 212,723 ballots, or half the vote polled at the general election. There was every incentive for them to poll their full strength, but no one opposed to prohibition was under any necessity to cast a vote. The limit set was vote enough for him. Prohibition is the most futile remedy for the evil of drink ever conceived by the mind of man. Nature abhors a vacuum, and will fill that vacuum with whisky, if there is nothing else to fill it with. If there is a dearth of ideas, cultivated tastes, rational enjoyments, social pleasures and congenial occupations in a man's mind and life, he will dissipate his energy through the indulgence of his appetites. Prohibition, even if successful, which it seldom or never is, does not attempt to fill the vacuum. It merely empties it and prepares it for the entrance of seven devils worse than the first. Canada is one of the most sober countries in the world, certainly the most sober Northern country. The reason is that Canada is full to the brim of possibilities of healthy enjoyment, and opportunities of progress and success to each individual. Man is a complex animal, whose every function demands of life its natural and healthful exercise. Look at any man to whom the excitement of alcohol has become an unavoidable necessity. You will find the history of the present morbid condition of his character in some defect in his environment at an earlier stage. His energy has taken this base outlet of dissipation, because its healthful outlet was for some reason or another denied him. The social reformer had better turn his attention to the environment in which the coming generations are being developed, and make it more healthy, more sane, more rational, more amusing, and more invigorating, if he wishes to accomplish any good, and not attempt to make the moderate use of alcoholic stimulants illegal, when the common sense of humanity absolutely refuses to consider it immoral.

PROFANITY.

A most amusing discussion on the subject of profanity has been taking place in the Saturday Review. There has been the usual outpouring about the people being more profane than they used to be, which is absurd. People of all ranks in society are much less profane than they used to be. The only difference is that nowadays the voice of the people is better heard and the senseless profanity still much in evidence echoes farther. One gentleman comes to the rescue of popular profanity, in which he finds a mine of folklore preserved. With regard to the great and fortunately almost peculiarly English epithet, "bloody," he says: "A very slight acquaintance with folklore reveals it as a fascinating outcrop of the primitive natural Christology of the foreworld, in which blood was the symbol of life. From that estate it has fallen, until now it merely serves as a term of emphasis." With all due deference to the Saturday Review and its contributors, this gentleman is driveling. "Bloody" used as an expletive has nothing of a sanguine character about it at all, although it is now used as an adjective. It is a contraction of "By our Lady," and the full form of the oath "Bloody Mary" is uncommon, but by no means extinct. "Bloody" is not regarded merely as a coarse, ugly word, but as an impious word by people who have generations ago lost the memory of what it really means, and that fact amply proves its origin to have had nothing whatever to do with blood. The speculations of this gentleman about the folklore contained in popular profanity are on the same level of intelligence as the disquisitions of Mr. Pickwick upon the hieroglyphic monument he found on his travels.

TRUE IF MIXED.

The following paragraph from the San Francisco Argonaut emphasizes a notable difference in Canadian as opposed to American character. The facts contained in the paragraph appear to be a somewhat ingenious mixture between the transcontinental system known as the Canadian North and the transcontinental system proposed by the Grand Trunk Railway Company:

The Canadians have a quiet but very energetic way of going about matters. But little was heard about the Canadian Pacific railway until it was nearly completed, the cable between Canada and Australia has been laid with very little flourish, and now the Canadians are to have a new transcontinental railway. Work has been going on quietly for nearly eighteen months, and it is to be finished in 1907. The road is to run from Quebec to Port Simpson, paralleling the Canadian Pacific, and 280 miles North of that line. It will run through a country that annually produces 52,000,000 bushels of wheat, and to the West of the wheat fields in the Territories of Alberta, Athabasca, and Saskatchewan are immense deposits of petroleum and coal of both kinds awaiting development. Port Simpson, the Western terminus, is the most Northerly Pacific port of the Dominion, being just South of the Southerly termination of the Alaska strip. It is just about half-way between Victoria and Skagway, thus offering the shortest sea trip to Alaska, and it is also on the shortest and most direct line to China. It has, therefore, both strategic and trade advantages over any existing route. Moreover, the harbor is said to be second only to that of San Francisco on the Pacific Coast.

THE TERMINAL RAILWAY.

Sir,—In your issue of November 30th, a correspondent signing himself "Mud," said:

MONSTROUS.

Sir,—The bonds of the Victoria & Sidney Railway company have jumped in a few months from about 90-95 to 105-110.

This means that some railway system requires this road, proposes to own it when the bonds mature, and has purchased the bonds with that intention. No other reason can be given for this phenomenal increase in these values.

When this statement appeared I was satisfied that it was not correct for no such rise or sales in the V. & S. bonds could have taken place without our being informed, but I have delayed contradiction until I could procure disinterested evidence as to whether the above statement was correct or not. I therefore had telegrams sent to A. E. Osler & Company and Aemilius E. Jarvis & Company, of Toronto, and the Hon. J. H. Turner, Agent-General of British Columbia, London, England. Osler & Co. replied as follows: "Victoria Sidney bonds not known on this market. To whom were they sold?"

Jarvis & Co. replied: "Know nothing of railway or security."

The despatch to Mr. Turner sent on December 4th was as follows:

"Has block Victoria-Sidney bonds been sold lately? Give present and previous quotations."

To this Mr. Turner replied on December 9th, having evidently taken full time to investigate:

"No sales. No quotations past or present." I am therefore at a loss to know where your correspondent can have obtained the information which he gave to the public in his letter, reference to which is also made in an issue of the Colonist of a later date by a correspondent signing himself "D. E. F.." I feel safe in saying from the evidence furnished by the above telegrams and from my own knowledge that no such transactions or rise in price in Victoria & Sidney bonds as your correspondent referred to can have taken place, neither can there be any reason speaking from a financial stand-point why any such transaction or rise in price should have occurred, and no further reason could exist as the ownership of the bonds does not necessarily at any time carry with it the ownership of the road. Your correspondent "D. E. F.," while admitting that the alleged purchase of the bonds could not be considered a satisfactory investment, states that the object of the purchaser is to own the railway, either being ignorant of or forgetting the fact that the bonds on maturity may be redeemed at par by anyone holding the stock of the V. & S. Railway company. The stipulations in the proposed by-law in relation to the interest upon the V. & S. bonds were insisted upon by the City Council as a necessary condition to any agreement and we shall be very glad to have the Council alter their decision in this matter, and deal with the extension of the Terminal Railway By-Law as a matter entirely apart from the Victoria & Sidney railway.

A. G. WOOD,
President V. T. R. & F. Co.

Victoria, B. C., Dec. 10th, 1902.

THE LATE EMIL ZOLA.

Curious Revelations of His Tastes and Intimate Life.

From London Truth.

I have been taken through Zola's town house. He seems to have had a presentiment that he would be killed in his bed at night. To secure himself against murderous burglars, he had a forged iron grating of a beautiful design placed across his bedroom in order to isolate the part in which he slept from the rest of the apartment. The structure of the bed rendered it impossible for anyone to hide under it. Zola himself kept the key of the wicket in the grating, he fearing that if he left it about a duplicate might be made. The bed is ponderous grandiose, and wholly out of proportion and harmony with the somewhat meagre architecture of the house. It must have been made long ago for some Italian magnifico's palace, and is misplaced in a building constructed by a stingy bourgeois. But Zola had no sense of harmony and proportion. He felt what was handsome in isolated objects, and revelled in their beauty.

The fireplace which sent out his stealthy murderer is low—very low—and narrow, but surmounted by a mantel of the richest carved marble. One sees in it the work of the facile Italian chisel that plays with technical difficulties. The columns supporting it had been tall, but Zola caused them to be shortened to fit his ugly little fireplace. Imagine a giant with his leather limbs cut off a little above the knee, and your fancy will present you a point of comparison with this once superb mantelpiece. An Italian holy water font and a Madonna and Child are among the bric-a-brac of this museum bedroom, which is one to frighten sleep away. But, though extremely superstitious in an Italian way, Zola had no Catholic feeling, and felt no veneration for the numerous virgins in marble faience, wood or in pictures that adorned his house. He possessed one attributed to Botticelli. The whole collection was Italian.

As to his superstitions, he feared the curses or ill-will of other human beings, and shivered when he thought of their possible occult effects. He dreaded the evil eye, and stood in awe of gypsies, with whom he had in some way connected himself in his evil days. He took care not to terminate or begin a week on Friday. Zola, nevertheless, should be regarded as a free thinker, so far as hypersensitiveness to impressions admitted of freedom of thought. With his extreme nervousness, he had a singularly thick skin. This came perhaps from his independence of sociability, and from his finding when alone plenty of company in the creations of his brain. I do not think him a great artist or a great philosopher, but a great prose lyrist and a prodigious creator of human types. All his characters sprang out of his early impressions. In his early life he used to help his mother when pushed by want of money. She took the family linen to a lavoir to wash it. Zola went there with it, and carried away a store of impressions that form the most telling chapters of "L'Assommoir," and in that way laid the foundation of his fortune.

HOW DOTH THE BUSY BEE.

In Scotland He is a Failure—No Honey Crop There.

From London Express.

Where shining hours are few and the rains descend during the whole flowery season the little busy bee can improve nothing, and apiarists grumble. From all parts of England comes news of poor honey yields, both in quality and quantity, while from Scotland the entire failure of the crop is reported. The fact is, as a leading bee farmer said yesterday, the honey has been washed away. Hundreds of thousands of tons are washed away every year, however, but the honey-gathering season only lasts for about three weeks, and the rains were practically continuous throughout the summer.

On many farms, where the hives are usually filled three times in a season they have not been filled once. And this despite the fact that combs are started for the bees, so that they may go out honey gathering in the first shining hour of the season. But there were few shining hours last summer, and the bees were kept indoors while the honey was being washed away.

Had the working bee as long a tongue as the bohemian bumble bee, there might have been a less sad tale from the bee farms. The red clover has more honey than almost any other flower, but only the bumble bee can gather it. The working bee confines his attention to the white clover and sainfoin, whence nearly all the English harvest is gathered. Possibly the bees have been improving the dull hours by perfecting themselves in the process of "canning" their honey. For their work amounts to "canning" since they deliberately turn round and sting a full cell before waxing it over, thus injecting an acid which preserves the honey from fermenting. When they are not out among the flowers they often repeat the antiseptic treatment of their stock.

There is a plentiful supply of Californian and Narbonne honey to make up the deficit of the "home bee;" but this price is likely to raise, as it will find an open market.

PHOTOGRAPHY THAT PAID.

An English magazine tells an incident in the life of the Princess of Wales, which shows how her accuracy and thoroughness avoided a possible catastrophe.

The Princess is, it appears, an enthusiastic amateur photographer, and with her daughter, the Princess Victoria, is in the habit of taking pictures of the scenery, people, and animals in and about Sandringham, herself developing and mounting them afterwards.

Several months ago while out in the park she took a snap-shot of the railroad bridge at Wolferton while a freight train was crossing it. When the picture was printed, the Princess observed a slight curv in the bridge. She went to the place from which she had taken it, and carefull inspected the structure. There was no such curve in it perceptible.

"I held the camera at the wrong angle, no doubt," she said, and, waiting until another train crossed, took another picture, developed and printed it.

Again the depression appeared at the same point in the bridge. She carried the picture anxiously to the Prince of Wales, who sent for the superintendent of the railroad. On enquiry it was found that the engineers of the trains had perceived a vibrating motion when crossing the bridge. It was examined, found unsafe, and condemned.

The persistence of the Princess in seeking to make perfect her little picture, and the intelligence that noted the slight deflection and saw in it a possible danger, in all probability prevented a catastrophe, and possibly a frightful loss of human life.

CASTRO'S LETTER.

Venezuelan President Uses Fine Words and Expresses Surprise.

Caracas, Dec. 8.—The Venezuela press publishes an open letter from President Castros on the embroglio with Great Britain and Germany. In this communication President Castro says: "Foreign cablegrams relate that certain foreign nations, among them Great Britain and Germany have allied themselves together to carry out acts of violence and aggression against Venezuela, and their manner of obtaining the resumption of the payment of interest on the public debt which is to be suspended as a consequence of the revolution that I lately crushed. Notwithstanding the official character of this news, I refuse to believe it, because it is inconceivable that nations which entertain cordial and friendly relations with Venezuela should prefer to resort to force rather than follow the diplomatic path, especially when the supposed difference comes fully within the jurisdiction of our laws, which are based on the principle of justice, which together with the other attributes of authority I have just redeemed. Had Venezuela refused to fulfil her fiscal engagements, and had justice and diplomacy exhausted their resources against such an attempt, only then could such extreme acts be expected, but this will never happen."

President Castro explains further on that his government has not increased the debt of Venezuela, and that he paid all that was owed during the Venzuelan revolution, including the German and other railroad freight charges occasioned by the transportation of troops. These acts he says should prove that the honesty of his administration, and what foreigners should expect of him. Peace is not far off, and with it the fulfilment of all his promises. He continues, "Honorably, I can not do more. I put honor first, and will not seek excuses to disarm foolhardy enemies, by humiliations which would offend the dignity of the Venezuelan people, and which would not be in accordance with my life. I repeat I do not believe these alarming versions. The cause of our national dignity is based in our right of our possession of justice, and on our relations of friendship and mutual respect for foreign nations." President Castro concludes recommending the Venezuelan press to observe the discretion and tact demanded by such an important matter.

OBITUARY.

Funeral of Mrs. Walkem Attended by a Large Concourse of Loving Friends.

The funeral of the late Mrs. Walkem, wife of the Hon. G. A. Walkem, Justice of the Supreme court, which took place yesterday afternoon, was largely attended to the graveside by sorrowing friends, many beautiful tributes being paid by floral offerings, showing how much the deceased had been loved, honored, and respected by her friends in life.

The hearse left the house on Blanchard street about 15 minutes to three, arriving at Christ church cathedral about 3 o'clock. The service was conducted by Rev. Canon Beanlands at the church, and by the Bishop of Columbia at the grave. The pall-bearers were as follows: Hon. Senator Macdonald, B. H. T. Drake, Hon. Justice Irving, A. Gillespie, A. W. Vowell, Hon. E. G. Prior, Hon. D. M. Eberts, Hon. C. E. Pooley, L. Crease and F. G. Vernon. The chief mourners were: The Hon. Justice G. A. Walkem, C. Rhodes, H. Walkem, R. C. Janion, C. C. Janion, A. C. Janion, J. H. Poff. The flowers were beautiful, a special carriage being required to carry them. In Mrs. Walkem Victoria has lost one of its most amiable and respected women. She leaves a sorrowing husband and daughter to mourn her untimely loss.

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Approaches fast. See that "hubby" on Christmas day slips on comfortable—at the same time beautiful, foot-resters, purchased from us. Shoes, too, are lasting and sensible evidences of the donor's regard—lasting in more ways than one if bought here, because the lasts on which our shoes are made need only two words to describe them "The Best."

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BORN.

SHEPHEARD—In this city on the 6th inst., the wife of B. F. Shepheard, of a daughter.

ALLAN—On the 9th inst., the wife of T. W. Allan, of 74 Henry street, of a daughter. d10

TOLSON—At Nanaimo, B. C., December 6th, the wife of L. G. Tolson, Salt Spring Island, a daughter.

MARRIED.

NIXON—ROBERTS—On the 28th inst., at Kuper Island, by the father of the bride, Arthur Parry Wood, eldest son of Col. Nixon, R.E., to Edith Margaret Rachel Dawendeens, eldest daughter of the Rev. R. J. Roberts.

BAINES—McKINNON—On November 25, at the Church of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, by the Rev. Father McGuckin, William Worsley Ward Baines, eldest son of Wm. Baines, Victoria, to Kathryn Ellen McKinnon, second daughter of A. F. McKinnon, Mount Pleasant, Vancouver.

DIED.

McLELLAN—At the family residence, Gorge road, on the 27th instant, Alexander James McLellan, a native of Prince Edward Island, aged 68 years.

WALKEM—In this city at Royal Provincial Jubilee Hospital, Sophia Edith, aged 42 years, beloved wife of the Hon. Mr. Justice Walkem.

PROTHERO—In this city on the 2nd inst., Breckon, South Wales, aged 78 years.

LOST AND FOUND.

LOST—A large red cow. Apply at this office.