

The Colonist

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THE SEMI-WEEKLY COLONIST

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THE PRICE OF COAL

There was an interesting discussion in the House yesterday over a resolution introduced by Dr. McGuire, of Vancouver, asking for the appointment of a commission to investigate the price charged consumers for coal in British Columbia. Some of the statements made were very striking. For example, Mr. Cotton said that no one in North Vancouver is allowed to sell coal, and that it is very nearly impossible for many people there to get even a little of this fuel. When they do they pay at least \$1.00 a ton more for it than they do in Vancouver. Mr. Watson, also of Vancouver, drew attention to the fact that in that city the absolute rule is that cash must accompany all orders for coal, and he said that this is the only commodity that is sold under such a rule. We suppose the answer of the retailers to this latter complaint will be that they have to account to the mines owners for the price of every ton of coal they receive, and that their margin, after paying first cost, freight, screening, sacking and delivery, is so small that loss of payment for one ton means loss of profit on several tons. It is not difficult to understand also that as no coal depot exists at North Vancouver, the retailer in Vancouver must charge an additional dollar for delivery there. The other day one of the mine managers said that producers of coal would well come an investigation, and that he was confident the result would be to show that the charge to local consumers is not unduly high. Indeed it has been suggested that the price may be advanced.

The argument of Dr. McGuire and others who spoke upon the resolution laid stress upon the fact that one of the claims we make for British Columbia is that we have an abundance of coal, and it seems to be hardly consistent with this claim that the price would be higher here than in almost any other part of Canada. Mr. Hawthornthwaite seemed to doubt the utility of any investigation, for he did not see what remedy can be applied; but then there is only one remedy for anything in the opinion of the member from Nanaimo, and that is the ushering in of Utopia, when he and Mr. Parker Williams will see to it that all wrongs are righted. Our view of the matter is that the public will welcome the proposed investigation. Every one complains of the high price of coal, and if it cannot be reduced, it would be well to be informed that good reasons exist for keeping it up. The general opinion is that the mine-owners are making an undue profit. It is to their interest that this impression, if unwarranted, should be dispelled.

A USEFUL DEPARTMENT

We have given in our news columns some particulars of the work done by the Provincial Bureau of Information. This is an exceedingly useful department of the administration, and it is filling a long-felt want, if the hackneyed expression may be excused. Mr. Frank I. Clark, who is at its head, enters upon his work with care and accomplishes results. The Bulletin issued from the department from time to time abounds in valuable information, and are got up with admirable judgment. A contemporary, commenting upon the work of the department, attempts to draw a comparison with the work of the Vancouver Island Development League, somewhat to the disadvantage of the former; but this is surely unwarranted, for there is no rivalry whatever between the two organizations, which work together in every way possible. Criticism has been made of the lack of information by the department on some points concerning which intending settlers make inquiries. There is no doubt that it would be well if the department knew everything that can be known about the province, but any reasonable person knows that it is absolutely impossible to collect such information. Considering the vastness of the field to be covered, the department has made really remarkable progress. At the same time, it is only fair to say that the department cannot ever be expected to answer all questions that may be put to it. The Colonist once had a caller from India, who said he was going to bring under the notice of the Colonial Office the fact that he could not be told any place in the province where he could get land for nothing or at a moderate rental, and at the same time enjoy the benefits of club life. This is an actual case, and he based his claim for such information upon the fact that in a Bulletin issued by the department it was man-

tioned that pre-emption and lease were among the ways in which land could be acquired from the Crown, and because elsewhere in the Bulletin it was said that land suitable for fruit farming could be bought near enough to Victoria to permit the occupier of them to enjoy club life in the city when he so wished. This is an extreme case, but it shows the limit to which seekers after information expect the government officials to be able to go. The department is prepared to answer most reasonable questions, and if it cannot tell everything that an intending settler would like to know, the explanation is that British Columbia is of imperial dimensions, and that years of labor and the expenditure of hundreds of thousands of dollars would be necessary to cover the whole ground.

THE CITY MARKET.

A correspondent writes us regarding the City Market, about the future of which building the City Council seems unable to decide. He thinks the answer to the question is to keep it as a market. This is not a new question at all. It has been discussed over and over again, and the Colonist has taken part in it. No one seems to be able to reach a satisfactory conclusion. There is one thing very certain, and it is that if it were possible to establish and keep up a city market in an efficient manner, it would be excellent for housekeepers, and would materially reduce the cost of living. What are the difficulties in the way of keeping up such a market? Here are some of them:

The indisposition of producers to take their commodities to a market and remain with them until they are sold. We do not seem to have very many people in this vicinity who are inclined to take that means of disposing of their produce.

The difficulty of securing prompt delivery of goods purchased at a market.

The unwillingness of a very large part of the community to "do marketing."

The practice of ordering goods over a telephone.

The practice of buying on credit.

The competition of Chinese gardeners who sell their goods from house to house.

The advantages that suggest themselves are:

The cheapening of farm produce by doing away with the middlemen.

The encouragement to farmers to produce more marketable produce, using the word "marketable" to mean saleable at the public market.

The ensuring of better sanitary conditions in the keeping of vegetables.

These are general advantages. Others may suggest themselves. One aspect of the case has been brought to our attention. At present when a housekeeper wishes to buy a box of apples, she orders them from her grocer and gets a box of No. 1 fruit, for which she pays a price that is arrived at after adding the cost of sorting, classifying and packing to the original cost of the fruit. But every one knows that as a matter of fact for household purposes one apple is quite as good as another of the same variety, provided they are equally sound. They look better on a plate or in a fruit dish if they are all the same size and large also, but for culinary purposes the culls are just as good as the first-class fruit. In the eastern provinces where apples are sold by the barrel, the buyer knows that he is going to take the small with the large, and he pays accordingly. When we buy our apples at a grocery we only get the large fruit and the grower usually finds it difficult to dispose of his culls, if he does the packing himself, whereas if the grocer does the packing, he makes his price to the consumer high enough to cover loss on culls.

LOCAL LEGISLATURES

Speaking of the debate on the address in the Ontario Legislature, the Toronto Globe says: "It must help people to realize the importance of the practical matters dealt with by the provincial legislatures." Our contemporary might very properly have said "legislatures," for the people of Canada are beginning to realize that possibly the business of the local legislative assemblies comes more closely home to them than that of the federal House. When Confederation was established there were not a few people who thought that the provincial legislatures would sink to a level little higher than that of the municipal councils, and there were some newspaper men, who seriously proposed to abolish responsible government in the

provinces and carry on matters just as the affairs of the counties are carried on. But time has shown the error of this view, and now it is seen that the provincial bodies have exceedingly important duties to perform. Indeed in a great Province like British Columbia, it may almost be said that the responsibilities of administration are greater in some respects than those which rest upon the federal authorities. At one time there was a pretty general belief that Parliament would take to itself very much wider powers than it had been accustomed to exercise, by extending the meaning of the words "for the general benefit of Canada," which occur in the B. N. A. Act when the powers of Parliament are defined; but we think it is now generally appreciated that the powers of the legislatures ought to receive the widest possible interpretation, so long as they do not trench upon matters that are essentially of a general character.

The East is having a tremendous snow storm. We suppose we may expect a piece of it here.

The Saskatchewan people, as represented in the legislature, seem to want the Dominion government to build and own the Hudson Bay Railway. The only difference between the members of the House appears to be as to how the case can be stated most strongly.

"Canada is as independent as some so-called independent states." So remarks a contemporary. But Canada is as independent as any so-called independent state. We say that under the British Constitution the King has the power to refuse assent to an Act of Parliament, but we know that in more than two hundred years the power has never been exercised, and therefore we claim, and justly, too, that Britain is ruled by its Houses of Parliament. The British Parliament has the power to alter and amend the British North America Act, whereby the Dominion of Canada was constituted, but it has never done so, except on the request of the Canadian Parliament. The power exists, but only on the condition that, like the veto power of the Crown, it shall never be exercised. Canada is quite independent. We are tied to the Empire by allegiance to the King, who is as much King of Canada as he is of England.

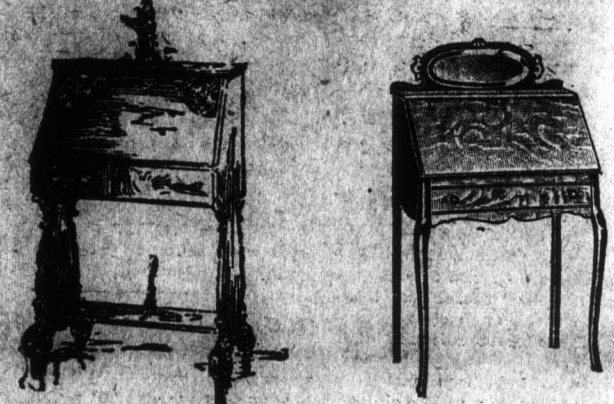
The following is taken from the Ottawa Citizen. It reads rather odd in these days when we hear so much about the increased cost of living. "A situation that does not reflect particular, or any, credit upon the typographical unions of the United States and Canada is revealed by a recent vote taken by the international union on the question of increasing the salaries of the president and secretary-treasurer of the organization. The proposition was badly defeated. Yet both these officials have worked hard and faithfully to secure for the members increases in their incomes. It is estimated that the increase proposed for the president and secretary-treasurer would have cost the members of the international union four cents each per annum. The decision naturally comes as a surprise in its emphatic reversal of 'doing unto others,' but illustrates one phase of human nature that all the advantages of practical fraternalism seem unable to eradicate.

The suggestion made by Mr. A. W. McCurdy, President of the Natural History Society at the close of Mr. Napier Denison's lecture on earthquakes, that an observatory should be established in Victoria, is well worthy of consideration. The study of seismic disturbances has advanced far enough to warrant the opinion that it may fairly be classed as a science. Thanks to Mr. Denison Victoria has taken a high place in the collection of data, and as these, and similar data seem very likely to prove of great advantage in the study of earth movements, we hope the Dominion government will see its way clear to provide for a thoroughly equipped observatory in this city of its vicinity. We believe Mr. Denison is entitled to the credit of suggesting that the study of seismic disturbances may prove to be valuable in connection with the safety of life in coal mines. He does not suggest, of course, that accidents can be prevented, but his theory is that it may be found possible to predict the chances of the release of gases in mines, and thereby bring about a more thorough inspection in times of probable danger than would be sufficient under normal conditions.

Victim of Pneumonia  
WINNIPEG, Feb. 2.—Word was received here today of the death in the Calgary general hospital last night from pneumonia of William Garson, excise controller of Winnipeg. Deceased was born in the Orkney Islands and was settled for some time at St. Catharines, Ont., sitting in the Ontario legislature for one term.

LONDON, Feb. 2.—It is said it has been definitely decided that the dowager Queen Alexandra will not attend the coronation.

Morris Chairs Ladies' Writing Desks



The Morris Chair, the chair of comfort, the chair with the swell appearance, is to be found here in great variety. Here you have a chair of great comfort, a chair that is famous, a chair of the very best quality, made of the very best material, and upholstered in the very best of goods. You certainly want one of these chairs in your home—you cannot have real home comfort without one. Come and try these chairs on our third floor. We have a splendid variety to select from. Below is a small list of our prices—

- Morris Chairs, solid quarter cut oak, golden finish, with adjustable denim cushions ..... \$15.00
- Morris Chairs, solid quarter cut oak, golden finish, with adjustable cushions in red velour ..... \$15.00
- Morris Chair, solid quarter cut oak, golden finish, with adjustable cushion in green denim ..... \$16.00
- Morris Chair, solid quarter cut oak, golden finish, with foot rests attached and adjustable cushions in red verona. Price ..... \$18.00
- Morris Chairs, solid quarter cut oak, golden finish, with foot rests and adjustable green-verona cushions ..... \$18.00
- Morris Chairs, solid quarter cut oak, golden finish, with green velour cushions ..... \$20.00
- Morris Chairs, solid quarter cut oak, golden finish, with adjustable verona cushions ..... \$27.50
- Morris Chairs, in solid quarter cut oak, golden finish, with adjustable red or green Morocco cushions ..... \$20.00
- The Famous Morris Smoker's Chair, with box arms, in solid quarter cut oak, golden finish, upholstered in denim. Price ..... \$20.00
- Morris Chair, solid quarter cut oak, Early English finish, with denim cushions ..... \$9.00
- Morris Chair, solid quarter cut oak, Early English finish, with red or green velour, adjustable cushions ..... \$15.00
- Morris Chair, solid quarter cut oak, Early English finish, in green denim ..... \$16.00
- Morris Chair, solid quarter cut oak, Early English finish, with adjustable cushions, in red or green verona, \$18.00
- Morris Chairs, solid quarter cut oak, Early English finish, with adjustable cushions, in green or red velour \$20.00
- Morris Chair, solid quarter cut oak, Early English finish, in Spanish leather cushions, \$45.00, \$40.00 ..... \$32.00
- Smoker's Morris Chair, in solid quarter cut, Early English finish, with adjustable cushions, in Spanish leather. Price ..... \$45.00
- Morris Chair, in fumed oak, upholstered in Spanish leather, loose cushions, \$50.00 and ..... \$40.00
- STOOLS IN FUMED OAK, TOP UPHOLSTERED IN LEATHER. SIZE 18 x 18 ..... \$7.00
- Foot Rests, in solid quarter cut oak, Early English finish, also in mahogany finish ..... \$3.50
- In fumed oak ..... \$4.00

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Royal Doulton Stoneware, Germ-Proof Filters

You want to drink pure water? Very well, give us a call. You can't beat this Doulton Filter, it is as simple as it looks. You can rely on getting pure water once it has gone through this filter. We have sold a large quantity of these filters since they arrived, and we have only a limited num-



ber left. If you are contemplating getting one this summer we are afraid you will be too late, as these are selling so fast we are afraid that our other order will not be here in time to replace these. Pure water is not a thing you should only drink in the summer time, you ought to drink it all the year round. Come and see these filters and let us demonstrate them to you. These are without doubt the best filters made.

- 1 gallon size ..... \$7.00
- 2 gallon size ..... \$9.00

We have other makes of Doulton Filters at—

- 1 gallon size ..... \$5.00
- 2 gallon size ..... \$7.00

Africa is naturally since the Suez Canal one. Naturally the with Asia by a low re major part of the Isth that has drifted in fro tour of the continent, notable feature being projecting peninsulas, ly from both Europe, tially resembles Souly Africa consists of t ated by a relatively lo north the Atlas Mou plateau of the Sahara not very high, and t many cases below the popular idea of the Sa Its area is about 3,450 was formerly supposed of country consisted deed of very recent y was made to cut a ca of the Atlantic could desert, the general ide greater part of the reg water, thereby creatin the Sahara is quite otion of shifting sands, which this description that are simply bare there are also hills an able altitude, and be that are very fertile an as well as of tropical nature of the Sahara is ploration has for the to the outer fringe of have traversed it from has made the journey east, or vice versa, a many valleys and oas has ever visited. Our desert water is found very large areas might be by irrigation from the case in Algeria.

South of the North lying somewhat lower of the Sahara, but not gion, that is known as transversely across the four thousand miles. pious precipitation fr winds which sweep of Ocean. Here are riv here that the Congo tak in the world is the grow as here, not even in the Amazon. The forests so dense that the Sun branches, beneath whi most perennial twigh South of the Suda plateau begins. Towa plateau rises into peak tains of Abyssinia, and the north between the and nearly to the shore The northern two-thir gion with abundant ra great lakes such as Tazas. Towards the S known as the Khalaha the Sahara it is not ex

SCOTTISH Mary Stewart, Quee a week old when she James V., to the throne is very frequently wr this is only its French equivalent of Mary, a in French. The news to her father when he His thoughts seemed riage of his ancestor w ert Bruce, for he ex with it! It came wit go with a woman." M of Lorraine, daughter She is known in hist Mary Stewart's fath daughter of Henry VI of Henry VIII. Jam thus nephew of Henr Elizabeth of England therefore Elizabeth's fi Henry VIII, died lea and two daughters, M right of succession to during the lifetime of fore as follows: Edwa