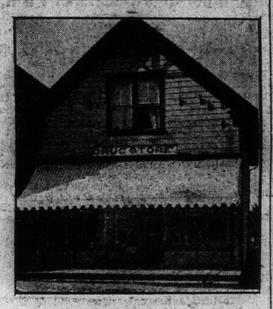
THE PROSPEROUS TOWN OF DUNCANS AND WEALTHY SURROUNDING DISTRICT

Duncans is perhaps one of the oldest and wealthiest settlements on Vancouver Island; at present its people certainly enjoy unequaled prosperity, and the indications are that it has come to stay.

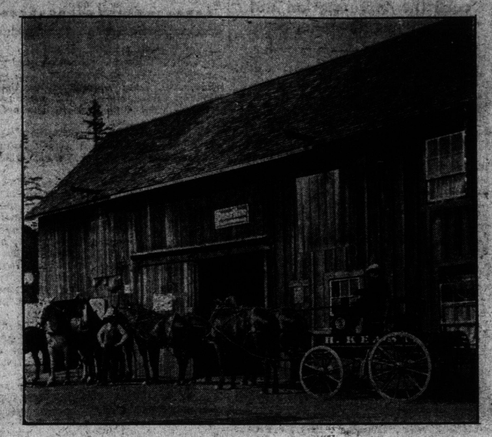
The proximity of Mount Sicker, on which are situated the Lenora and Tyee mines, together with the innumerable prospects with every indication of permanency, make the town a very important centre. The creamery, too, has proved a very successful venture, the management being absolutely unable to fill the demand now or at any time for the past two years.

The various stores in the town are all doing good business, every one of them reporting phenomenal increase in volume of business done during the present year, with every prospect of a still further increase for the next six months. After the present month has ended, active development work will start on a large number of mining claims the owners of which are Duncans people, and by next spring they should be well proved and the good ones picked out. That there are very many good ones there is no room to doubt, the samples shown and assays obtained, to say nothing of the quantities of ore in sight, especially in the Lake View group of claims, on Mount Gordon, where there is 3½ miles of solid ore running $40 to the ton. There are sixteen claims in the group, and the owners have certainly every reason to feel fully satisfied with the camp's prospects. Six of these are owned by Messrs. Shelton, Prevost and Douglas (s[illegible]t), and a large amount of developmen work has already been done, and an active winter's work will be inaugurated in September. The value of the Mount Sicker mines are too well known to need comment in this article, but the fact that they are so rich and prosperous is a boon to the people of the town, and duly appreciated.



DRUG STORE, DUNCANS.

Mr. Ventress, proprietor, came to Duncans about two years ago, and has not regretted establishing the business, which has steadily grown until now it is in a very flourishing condition. Mr. Ventress is agent for the Colonist, and copies of this edition may be obtained from him; price, 5 cents each.



KEAST'S LIVERY STABLE—Arrival of the daily mail and passenger stage from Mount Sicker

Mr. Keast has a large and profitable business, and is prepared to meet the demands of any and all who require conveyances of any description.

W. P. JAYNES' STORE, DUNCANS

Mr. Jaynes has one of the oldest established businesses on Vancouver Island, and the extent of the premises gives a very fair idea of the amount of business transacted. In addition to this store, Mr. Jaynes has another 1½ miles further south, which is run in connection with a large farm he owns and operates. The situation is an ideal one, only a few yards from the railway station and freight sheds, and next door to the Tzouhalem Hotel, and within easy distance of both the Quamichan and the Alderlea.

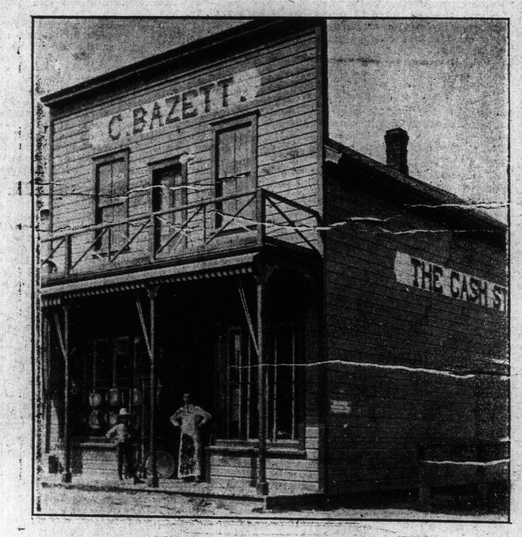
Duncans is the station for Mount Sicker. A stage runs daily, under the direction of Mr. Herbert Keast (a cut of whose premises is shown elsewhere) who has the contract for carrying His Majesty's mails. The stage leaves Duncans daily, except Sunday, at 12:30 p. m.; returning, it leaves Mount Sicker at 7:15 a. m. On this trip an altitude of 1,600 feet has to be climbed in 3½ miles. Mr. Keast is thoroughly well fitted up for a large amount of business, looks for it and gets it.

Passengers for Cowichan Lake travel via Duncans, from which point Messrs. Price Bros. run a stage three times per week—Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, returning on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays; on the latter days arriving at Duncans in time for the evening train, on the other days in time for the morning train. The return fare, Victoria-Cowichan Lake, is $5, via the E. & N. railway, and there is no finer trip on the American continent. Certainly, if it were better known it would be more extensively patronized. The trip from Cowichan Lake to Duncans per Indian canoe is a very popular and exciting trip to those who have made it. The distance is 25 miles, and parts of it—especially the run through the canyons—is very exciting and exhilarating. Full arrangements will be made willingly by Mr. Frank Jaynes, manager of the Tzouhalem Hotel, Duncans, who attends to the hiring of both canoes and Indians. A telephone message or letter will be promptly attended to.

There are very many places of interest in the vicinity, notably Quamichan Lake, Someenos Lake, Cowichan River and Cowichan Bay. Quamichan Lake is three miles east: during the season there is splendid fishing, and during hunting season splendid duck shooting. The same may be said of Somenos Lake, half a mile north of Duncans. Salt water is only 3½ miles east, and in Cowichan Bay there is every facility and inducement for salmon fishing, both spring and fall, and kindred salt water sport and amusement. In fact, take it all around, Duncans has the enviable record of being able to supply sport and amusement at any and all seasons. Fishing, shooting, sailing, cycling, canoeing, tennis and swimming are obtainable, and the large number of local sportsmen assist very materially to make any visitor's stay both pleasant and profitable.

As stated elsewhere, the hotel accommodation is of the very best, both the Tzouhalem and Quamichan being first-class houses in every respect, and the managers spare neither expense nor trouble to make visitors comfortable and at home. At Cowichan Lake, Messrs. Price Bros. have an hotel which is an ideal resort and very popular with sportsmen who have visited there from time to time.

In a future issue the Colonist will deal with the surroundings of Duncans more particularly from an agricultural standpoint. One notice of this issue will be given in the regular daily issue.



C. BAZETT—CASH STORE

Mr. Bazett has been in business for twelve years, and does only a strictly cash business. The business is well established and very prosperous. Mr. Bazett finds it pays to deal for cash, finding that small profits make large returns. The business is constantly growing and is still on the increase.

BUTCHER SHOP—S. C. BELL, Prop.

Mr. Bell keeps a large stock always on hand, and is prepared to keep the town provided with the very best of meats and poultry. Mr. Bell buys hides and skins.

"Admitting that knowledge of Presbyterianism is far less important than knowledge of Christianity and the evangelical truths, we still claim that it has an importance of its own, says the Presbyterian Banner, of Pittsburg, Pa. "How can we hope to keep within the membership of our own church those who do not know anything about our distinctive principles and history? If we allow them to think that one church is as good as any other, that it is a matter of indifference to what church they go, that the differences of doctrine, worship and government which distinguish our church from others, are all trivial differences not worth teaching publicly or privately, why should they not be their church connection be determined by their social associations or chance whims or the toss of a penny? Is it strange that the daughter follows her husband out of our church, and the son also respects the preference of his wife for another church? Is it strange that the Presbyterian family, moving into a new locality, passes by the Presbyterian Church for no other than merely social reasons? What reasons do they know for adhering to their own church?"

...THE COWARD...

The Story of a Fight.

Written for The Colonist . . By T. L. Grahame

"SOME of my most intimate friends believe, in spite of my unusually robust physique and my uncommon bodily strength, that I am a coward."

A coward! What, that magnificent specimen of Anglo-Saxon manhood, compact of thews and sinews, whose slightest motions betokened the supple power of the trained athlete, and whose blue eyes, so clear, so alert, must be veritable liars did they illumine only the palsied soul of a poltroon. A coward! No, indeed, not that man; it was impossible.

Cowards do not have the head of the divine Hermes set upon a neck massive as a column; nor does the craven heart usually beat under such great shoulders, behind such a deep, broad chest. Neither can one associate in one's mind the hairy, muscular hands of a strong man, a hand such as held the cigar which this man was enjoying, a hand and wrist like those of a gladiator, with the pusillanimous heart of the effeminate coward.

Come, this fellow is only a poseur, said we, his traveling companions, in the smoking compartment of the parlor car swinging along the mountain section of the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway, bound north from Victoria—only a compliment-hunter, seeking cheap admiration.

Probably it was the dismal weather outside which had driven us, the victims of boredom, into one another's arms for solace; for we had read all that the newspapers had to tell, we had found the magazines more than ordinarily jejune and vapid. The cheerless, untimely rain smote the roof of the car with the singing, hissing appulsion of fine shot, and flew in ghostly sheets across the sodden landscape, bedraggling its June finery of bloom and verdure; reminding one of the plight of a luckless bride who had met ill fortune in the weather on her wedding morn.

The man who had spoken was he who had shattered the ice of our British reserve shortly after leaving Victoria, and conjured us into quite an animated conversation, which was passing the time for us finely, when his odd remark struck a strange note in the talk. Every eye was scanning him curiously; he looked like a man who had a story to tell, and it would be worth hearing, if he were not a downright humbug, who was only practising postures for his own amusement. A smile lit up the good-natured features of our fellow-traveler, as he looked around the group of eager faces.

"I suppose you wouldn't mind me telling you about a little adventure I had a few years ago, when I used to live out here in British Columbia?"

For reply every man hitched himself into a more comfortable position, invited the traveler to go on, and then settled down to listen. Taking another long pull at his fragrant splendidad, and flicking the ash off with the practised touch of the veteran victim of the weed, the big man began, in his pleasantly-modulated voice:

"The suspicion, or imputation, that I am a coward does not trouble me as much as you might think, because there is really some ground for the charge. Yes, you may look surprised at such an admission, for you know as well as I do that hardly any charge is more odious to an ordinary, healthy man than that charge of the white liver. We all resent it much more passionately and bitterly than we do insinuations of a much graver character. For, you know, it is impossible to tell what a man is as to physical or moral courage until he is seen under a really crucial test. How it came about that I gained the unsavory reputation of having a chicken heart, with a bullock's carcass, was thus:

"One evening, after a very pleasant dinner party at the home of my friends, the Browns, in Toronto, my native city, a familiar of the family, and of mine, arrived very late, long after dinner, indeed, having traveled for some hours through a blizzard, and got thoroughly chilled. After assuring the company that he was as cold as a frozen fish, he came up behind me, in order, no doubt, to give practical illustration to his remarks. I was deep in a delightful tete-a-tete with my fiancee, Miss Brown, at the time, and so absorbed in the charm of the moment that I was quite unconscious even the arrival of the waggish friend of the family. He suddenly gripped me on the back of the neck with his cold, clammy hand, as frigid and chilling as the hand of a corpse.

"I don't know how to explain it, gentlemen; it must have been my subconsciousness usurping momentarily all my powers of motion, bringing back, as if in a lightning flash, a memory so hideous, so damnably and insufferably torturing that consciousness of my present, of my surroundings, was utterly lost in the fierce touch of that blasting past. At any rate, I sprang from my seat into the air, at the same time uttering a hoarse and awful scream, as horribly discordant as that which bursts from the very soul of the strong swimmer in his agony.

There I stood, a moment, before them all, my eyes starting from their sockets, my mouth agape, my curved fingers like the claws of a bird of prey, clutching at space, my attitude that of a man in the very article of mortal fear. Fear, abject fear, noted every lineament of my ashen visage. On my forehead felt the icy, drenching sweat that starts only in moments of utter terror. Ah, gentlemen, that was the wrong place to show anything resembling the white feather. Aghast, wondering and silent, the whole company stared at me.

"Well, I need hardly go into the painful details of what followed. You see, old Brown had been a gallant soldier; fought all over the world under the Union Jack, and was absolutely eccentric—a little off, you know, on all that concerned honor, especially as it related to personal courage. And the whole family took after him, by Jove; so you can just see how fatally my involuntary lapse affected not only my chances of ever becoming a member of that family, but also of retaining even their friendship. In point of fact, the studied politeness, the cold, even contemptuous, looks directed toward me during the remainder of that miserable evening gave me all the intimation I required that nothing remained but to take myself off as gracefully as I could, and return no more.

"Could the glances of the human eye wither up solid human flesh, be sure that I should have shriveled into a mummified husk under those calm, scornful stares. And my cursed pride would not let me offer one word in explanation, which might have redeemed me in the estimation of those exceedingly punctilious descendants of the mediaeval knights, and inheritors of their top-lofty notions of things; because I felt angry at them for magnifying a trifling slip, and their readiness to condemn for a momentary weakness. Yet I was sad to see fading under those looks of aversion the delightful understanding which had grown up between those people and myself. How I took myself out of that house I know not. It was as if the pall of death itself had fallen; you might have thought that the hero of the family lay stark in his coffin downstairs. In their opinion, though, there had been a death—the death of my reputation as a man after their own style.

"Remember, gentlemen, those people were the true lineal descendants of that antique chivalry which is at once so charming and so laughable, and which must have made the Middle Ages to a certain extent delightful. Perhaps you have met people of that sort yourselves; their queer, out-of-date notions amaze one in this business-college age. My frailty under the hands of the practical joker revealed to them, as they thought, my utter baseness, my poltroonery, the fact that I was an arrant coward; the fellow who would be afraid to resent an affront, from whom no counter-attack could be expected. My silence condemned me.

"Nevertheless, I don't think I am the sort that could put into practice the sublimed philosophy which calls for such an exhibition of tremendous self-control as to turn the other cheek to the smiter. We are all a long way from the time when we shall view the victim of that cruel smiting with admiration for his moral courage, and despise the smiter for his stupid brutality. At all events, those good friends of mine gave me icy good-night, nor ever asked for the explanation that my pride-bound tongue refused to offer.

"Now, you would perhaps care to learn why I, who am so big and strong and agile, should shrink and scream like a sickly woman merely because cold fingers have suddenly gripped my warm nape?

"Well, for a number of summers, when I was representing my firm out here in British Columbia, having my headquarters in Vancouver, I spent my vacation at a farmhouse on the eastern shore of Gabriano Island, on the west side of the Gulf of Georgia. The people of the farm were of that rare and admirable breed who make a kind of religion of minding their own business, and leaving that of other people to mind itself, and who display no gaping astonishment at the habits of other folk, even though those habits may seem to them exceeding odd. This just suited me. I was allowed to come and go, fancy free, unmolested, unwatched. Hence my early morning plunges off the rocks which gird the island at that part were strictly coram naturae.

"My favorite spot was a smooth ledge of rock which jutted its granite lip poutingly from the face of the almost perpendicular cliff, about twenty or twenty-five feet above the water, which there was full many a fathom deep, and like liquid emerald. One morning late in June, toward the close of my vacation, I scampered down to my diving platform just as the sun had nicely cleared the dark serrated ridge of the Cascade Mountains away across the Gulf. It was a gorgeous riot of color indescribable, making all the water over by Howe Sound like ripe peaches on autumn leaves of maple. Verily, this is the land of tint and glorious hue, and I'm an utter sensualist in color.

"In puris naturalibus, save for the slight cincture that we, of the athlete tribe always don, I stood there greedily absorbing my fill of that exquisite panorama. The Gulf lay like a vast mirror of beryl, the young sunbeams flashing joyously from its broad expanse, heralding the coming of an overpoweringly sultry day. Texada's purple sierra sharply cut the tender azure of the northern skyline, whilst dimly and spectrally loomed up afar in the wilds of Washington the giant bulk of Mount Baker. The air was of that indescribably delicious freshness which comes where sea and mountain mingle their fresh breaths. So there was I, in Nature's very temple, exulting in form and color and feeling; a confessed epicurean, unashamed to cry in the ecstacy of the moment an invocation to gods inanimate: 'Tellus! fair Tellus! Heaven enow art thou. Nature, Mother Nature! no other mistress may with thee compare! Thalassa! Thalassa! Bride of warriors and strong men, smile not in vain; more potent over my soul are thy wooing murmurs than thunders of Olympus. I come to thy arms as the meteor cleaves the ether of upper heaven!'

"Thereupon, in the joy of rhapsodic love—for I was young and full of the capacity for enjoyment and love for beauty, nature and the things which ascetics bid us renounce and despise—I leaped strongly forth from my ledge into the caller air, poised one moment, arms far apart, and then shot into the dusk of the gods, the dark, glassy gloom of the nether depths. Of course, I always keep my eyes wide open when upon those submarine journeys. It is quite instructive to study marine flora and fauna in the first person singular—just a trifle singular, you would say, to be doing it standing on your head, as it were—but it has the charm of novelty; and what a wonderful scope the eye has then! It is like seeing a countryside at midnight by lightning flash; a photographic comprehension of vision that enables one to detect objects unnoticed in daylight; new conceptions of the landscape are pictured with extraordinary vividness on retina and brain in those dazzling moments.

"As I passed swiftly down I observed what I took to be the tail of a young kelp plant floating out from a dark, ragged hole in the face of the bluff, about four or five feet under water, the end nearest the rock being concealed in the small cavern. I paid little heed to this at the moment, though, as I clambered out breathless for another plunge, it struck me that if that were kelp it was strangely out of place, as there was not a bit of the stuff to be found anywhere near that part of the island coast. And then the peculiar wavy oscillation of the thing occurred to me as unusual.

"After a short breathing spell, a vigorous rub-down and a quick run over my exercises, once more I swept downward into the deep. Even before my hands cleft the water I saw the supposed tail of kelp almost immediately in the line of my rush, but now multiplied to three or four other tails. I determined to investigate the phenomenon on my upward course, so did not go far down. Turning quickly in toward the rock, I slowly rose in the direction of the little cave from which the long pendulous tails gracefully tapered. Fortunately, as it happened for me, I was a little to one side of the hole as I reached its level and was about to seize the nearest of the streamers.

"One glance into the darkened aperture disclosed to my horrified vision a dun-colored globular mass, like a large bag, in the centre of which gleamed two eyes like carbuncles, and from which extended what seemed to me a dozen of the arms or tails which I had mistaken for kelp. Instantly conscious of my grave peril, I thrust myself with a powerful convulsive movement away from the rock and madly struck out for the surface. If I moved rapidly, the motions of the octopus were lightning-like. Have you ever bathed in tropical waters and heard the cry of 'Shark!' and strained nerve and muscle to gain ship or shore? Then you will know what my sensations were like as I tore my way madly through that smiling, sunlit water. 'Twas but a moment, all this; passed almost in the space of one of those words I speak, yet a lifetime seemed to be compressed into that fierce tragical moment in which I sought to win the air and life.

"As my head emerged, I felt the simultaneous impact of those dreadful tentacles upon the nape of my neck, around my forearm and around my right ankle. By a huge effort I got my right hand fairly on a little point of rock just at the water-line, and clung to it with the strength of despair. Think of my position. My body submerged up to the shoulders, my head being twisted slowly backward by the steady pull from below, my left arm helpless and bound as it were to my side, one leg useless, and, God! it flashed upon me, with stunning force—the tide was rising! More than that, the water was intensely cold; for this very quality I had loved it in my plunges; but now it, too, was striking home at my life.

"For a moment I lost my composure and was filled with the wild panic of the unreasoning brute. But the imminence of death soon sobered my distraught faculties. I became quite calm; the blood once more coursed out from my heart, whither it had surged with suffocating force in my distraction. My mind became clear, cool, calculating. Life was at least in sight, though a death of supreme and lingering agony confronted me so closely.

"So far the monster had confined his efforts to improving his first hold upon me, slowly increasing the extent of his grip, the long tentacles crawling like snakes steadily and surely further up my submerged limbs. The silent grim struggle really began when the first gradual downward pull was exerted and the hundreds of horrible suckers cupped me like white-hot needle points. I thought the muscles of my right arm would crack with the strain. Suddenly the brute relaxed its hold, evidently for the purpose of taking a still firmer grasp. With a quick wrench I freed my left arm and gripped a small jagged piece of driftwood that lay in a crevice near at hand. Armed with this primitive weapon I worked hard to loosen the burning cinctes of the creature's tentacle from my neck. The infernal suckers were fiercely at work, and the pain was becoming excruciating. Probably the sharp point of the stick struck a sensitive part of the feeler, for it was suddenly relaxed. I seized the opportunity and heaved my body almost out of the water to the waist-line and fastened both hands in a crevice of the rock farther up. This advantage was partly counteracted by the imprisonment of my right leg, around which were fastened, quick as lightning and with hideous energy, no fewer than three tentacles.

"Until this moment the struggle had gone slightly in my favor, but the death-grapple was yet to come. Unsustained by any food, having partaken of no nourishment since early on the preceding evening, and then only such a Spartan repast as devotion to the manly exercises imposes upon one, I felt my strength going fast beneath the fearful strain from below. The octopus had now concentrated his forces in two places—four of his long arms were evidently wound around the rocks beneath, whilst the remainder were massed like knotted snakes about my right leg, from ankle to thigh, the beast having abandoned his hold upon my left leg, which I had now drawn up out of the water, so that I lay in a half-reclining position, most painful and awkward, preventing me from putting forth my full strength.

"I cannot describe the horrible sensation which was produced upon my mind and body by the contact of those awful feelers, and by the grim, unrelenting downward pull to death. Moment by moment I felt the strain telling upon my waning strength. I wondered in a dazed sort of way how long it would last, and what it would be like to go under ultimately and be heard of no more amongst the living. Images of dear faces, scenes of youth, memories of happy days passed in procession through my mind; even worry about my business affairs and things that should be attended to, which only I could do, fretted my mind.

"And ever the enemy, with horrible determination, inexorably improved its advantage by extending gradually but surely its deadly grasp upon my palpitating limb.

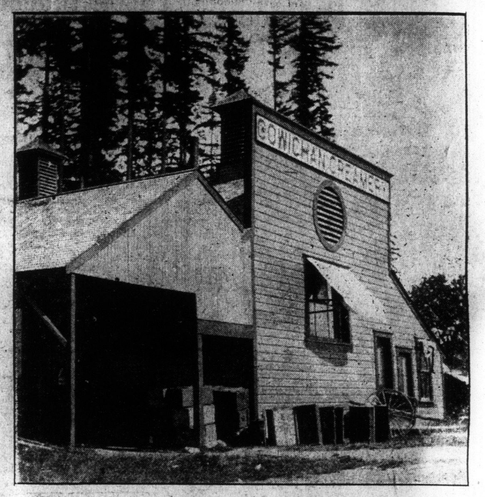
"Strange to say, throughout this death struggle I had not uttered a sound to sent up one cry for help to the farm house, half a mile away. Why, I can not explain; perhaps, in the presence of the grotesquely horrible and of extreme danger, the faculties become so fixed upon the one grand effort of physical self-rescue that all thought of appeal to mere extraneous possibilities becomes lost.

"Suddenly there came a desperate wrench upon my leg, which submerged me again below the waist-line and sent a shoot of horrible pain through every part of me. Only the rigorous grasp which I had secured with my fingers in the crevice saved me from going down. Try as I might, I could not regain the lost ground; it was like tugging at a chain. The rising tide purled musically amongst the inequalities of the steep rocks, and its soft murmurs recalled to me that in any event my doom would be sealed by that very element in whose embraces I had enjoyed so much delicious pleasure.

"Despair settled down upon me: I prepared for death, when, to my boundless joy, I observed, only a few inches above my hands, in another little rift in the rock, a long, sharp-pointed stick, such as the Indians use for spearing flounder or crab. Feeling cautiously with my left foot, I found the slight roughness in the rock that provided me with the necessary base for the execution of the manoeuvre which I now felt certain would release me from the toils of the squid. Carefully fixing my left hand in the crevice, while with my right I reached out for and drew toward me the stick, I soon had its sharp point turned in the direction of my unseen foe. Carefully calculating direction and distance, I then, with all my remaining pith, drove the weapon down again and again as only a man fighting for his life can strike. At first the only effect was an increased suction on my leg and and added strength to the pull downward, which almost dislodged me; for, athlete though I am, I have foolishly allowed my left arm to remain weaker than my right, a serious blunder always. The brute's astonishing reserve of strength appalled me.

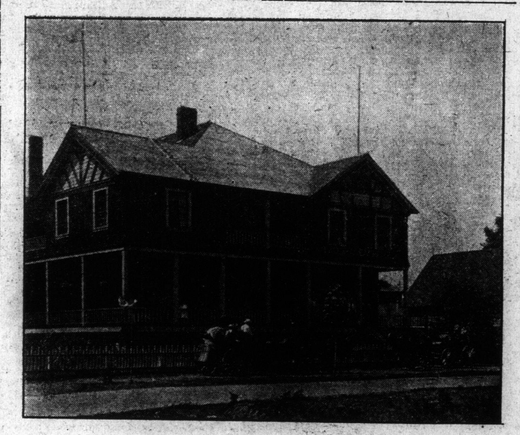
"Then, oh joy! a sudden slackening; again a tightening of the serpentine folds, spasmodic twitchings, and the sea all round me became black as ink, as the monster cuttle writhed under my proddings and ejected his defensive fluid. Finally I felt the long tentacles relax one by one and slip down into the depths listlessly, as if lifeless, and my leg was free.

"How long I lay insensible after clambering painfully to the top of the bluff and falling into a grassy dell, I know not; but I never tasted anything so sweet as the south wind blowing around me, and the warm June sun bathing me as I lay inert, drinking in the smell of flowers, of woods, of earth, when I awoke from that torpor of death to feel that I was victor, though a nervous wreck, and a starting, shrinking coward at certain touches, to the end of my days."



COWICHAN CREAMERY.

Of this very profitable institution little more can be said than quote the report of the secretary to our special correspondent: "We cannot nearly fill the demand." First prize in 1901 and a diploma in 1902, it speaks volumes for the immense success of this, the first creamery on the Island.



TZOUHALEM HOTEL, DUNCANS.

This handsome and well-appointed house reflects the highest credit on the proprietors, Messrs. Price Bros., who operate both this and the Lakeside Hotel, on Cowichan Lake. In connection with the latter a daily stage is run, the drive being one of the most interesting and delightful it is possible to take among the very many on the Island. The Tzouhalem (pronounced Su-halem) has very recently been built, but has already established itself as one of the very finest tourist resorts on the Island; indeed, it could not be otherwise, considering its very excellent management, situation and comfort. With deep, airy verandahs, smoking room, parlor, billiard room and bar, it has everything that a holiday-maker could possibly desire; and the river is but five minutes' walk away, where the best fishing in the world can be had at the right season and where, in the hot weather, one can have a delightful bathe. Mount Sicker stage leaves the hotel daily at 12:30 p. m. In the cut can be seen both of the stages ready to start. Mr. Frank Price was the pioneer hotel-keeper in Duncans, operating the Quamichan Hotel, burnt in 1901.

DUNCANS STATION, E. & N. RAILWAY—Arrival of the train from Victoria daily at 11 a. m.