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THE SEMI-WEEKLY COLONIST

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THE ROGERS PASS DISASTER

The prompt action of the Provincial Government in directing its local agents to take every measure in their power to succor and assist those who have suffered in the disaster in Rogers Pass will meet with the unqualified approval of the people. If it is necessary to provide for the immediate relief of any who have been left destitute by the calamity, we are sure the Government will be quick to act. It is to be remembered, however, that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company has a duty to discharge in this connection and it may be trusted not to fail to respond to all legitimate calls upon it.

Mr. McBride spoke of the heroism exhibited by the men who perform such work as that which cost so many lives. We go to sleep in our railway train at night with a feeling of security. The train rushes along through mountain gorges and along precipices, where there is only a little margin between us and death. Yet we hardly give a second thought to the chance of accidents, because we know that, day and night, watchful men are patrolling the track on our railway passengers. These men almost daily perform acts which to others would seem heroic. They do not tell of them. The sleeping passengers never know at what risk the line has been made safe for them. It was therefore fitting that the legislature should place on record an acknowledgment of their work and pay a tribute to the brave fellows who perished in the discharge of duty.

DEFENCES

Major A. G. Sargison writes us a letter suggested by the excellent practice made by the garrison at Work Point Barracks, to which reference has already been made in the Colonist. The record of the shooting shows that the garrison would be able to give a very good account of themselves if an emergency arose and they had the right sort of guns at their command. We have never yet heard any satisfactory explanation of the failure of the Dominion authorities to mount the 92 guns, which have been lying at the base of Signal Hill ever since the Imperial forces left them there. We understand that these guns are not in all respects modern, but they are a great deal better than anything now available to the garrison.

It has always been the policy of the Colonist to discuss matters pertaining to defence from a non-partisan point of view. Hence we have confined ourselves to mentioning the fact that these guns have lain at the foot of the Hill without any attempt being made to put them in position. It seems time that some explanation were forthcoming. The impression left on every one's mind by the facts is that there is gross carelessness somewhere, or at least a spirit of indifference, which does not augur well for the efficiency of the Militia Department. The matter might very well form the subject of an inquiry in Parliament. Perhaps Sir Frederick Borden could give some explanation.

THE FEDERAL REVENUE

In the first eleven months of the current fiscal year the revenue of Canada has reached the record sum of \$89,884,840. If this rate is maintained the year will close with a total not much short of \$100,000,000, and there is a chance that this figure may be reached. This is a very remarkable showing. The increase is not due to any special action on the part of the government, but wholly to the general revival of business. It indicates a degree of prosperity that is full of promise for the future. The revenue of Canada is much larger per capita, and much more buoyant than that of the United States, and it must rank with any of the leading countries of the world. One can say with perfect confidence that the burden of contributing this large sum of money to the public treasury is not felt by the people, consciously at least. We suppose that, in the long run, every dollar contributed in taxation is just so much less available for other purposes; but where the bulk of the revenue is raised, as ours is, by customs and excise, it is paid in small instalments and people automatically adjust their living to the conditions created thereby. The expanding revenue seems to indicate a very prosperous year, and it is not the only sign pointing in that direction. Indeed there never was a year in the history of the Dominion, when the outlook for the future was nearly so favorable as it is at the present time. There are signs of better times from one end of Canada to the other.

The Empire Gazette is the latest contribution to what may be called Imperial journalism. Doubtless it will improve with age. The first number is very amateurish.

SEWERAGE DISTRICTS.

A very important piece of legislation had its second reading yesterday. It was a Bill to provide for the establishment of sewerage districts in an organized parts of the province, upon the request of the residents. The provisions of the Bill seem fully adequate for the purposes for which they are intended. If we have any criticism to make on the subject it is that there is nothing in the measure to authorize the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, on the recommendation of the Provincial Board of Health and after hearing the parties interested, to compel the institution of a sewerage system. Possibly this would be too drastic, and we fancy that as a general rule the people of districts, where sewerage is necessary, will be willing to provide it now that the facilities for doing so will be afforded. The only opposition is likely to come from non-resident property owners; but as sewerage will enhance the value of their property, and as the law will provide for the extension of payments over a period of forty years, it is not likely that any serious objections will be raised by them. Mr. Taylor, Minister of Public Works, has addressed himself to the solution of what is, in some localities, a question of very great importance, and we believe the result will show that he has done so very successfully.

FRUIT LANDS.

We find in the Vernon News a well-considered article on Fruit Land Values. The Colonist has often been asked if it did not consider the price of fruit lands around Victoria excessive, and it has always replied in the negative. Land values must be judged not by any arbitrary standard, but by what the land will produce. This is the view taken by the Vernon News, and it supports its position by quoting from the Wenatchee Republic. The observations of both papers are so full of suggestions that we reproduce them at length.

Intending settlers in this part of British Columbia are sometimes rather staggered at the prices asked for fruit lands here. And yet we venture to predict that within a very few years the prices now obtaining will seem ridiculously small. In support of this contention we draw attention once more to an article from the Republic which contains facts and deductions that speak for themselves. The Wenatchee paper says:

"Ten thousand dollars an acre is the value that Wenatchee fruit lands will be selling for before many more years are past. The fact is that the steadily increasing amounts for which orchard tracts are being sold now.

"You may regard \$10,000 dollars as an exorbitant price, but it's not when you take into consideration the earning power of an acre. Take the Turner tract, for instance, which is now making \$1,000 a year to the acre for its owner.

"On a 10 per cent basis, this means that the land is worth \$10,000 an acre. The Turner property is by no means an exception. There are other orchards in the valley owned by Spitzbergs and Whitesaps doing equally well. Any of the land here intelligently cultivated in a scientific way will do as well.

"Valuations on bearing orchards are mounting rapidly. It was not so long ago that \$1,000 an acre was regarded as an unreasonable sum. But now \$2,000 is being paid right along, and only a few weeks ago seven acres sold for \$21,000. What is more, Eugene Page refused \$5,000 an acre for his place. The owners of bearing orchards know what they have got and as time goes on they will hesitate more and more to sell their places.

"The people who are coming into the valley now are of a more settled class. They want places to make their homes, and consequently it is going to be hard to buy bearing orchards at any price before very long. Now why should a person sell fruit land that brings him a large return and requires only four or five months' work each year? It would be impossible to find another investment anywhere that pays so well and so surely.

"People who are unacquainted with the possibilities of land in this locality will laugh at this assertion on top values as ridiculous. Particularly is this true of the Eastern farmer whose notion of worth is limited to the soils of his vicinity where from \$40 to \$100 measures the outside prices for agricultural lands, because they will not make a fair return on a heavy valuation."

While the observations in this connection relate to irrigated fruit lands, they apply with equal force to the fruit lands of Vancouver Island. We think it can be justly claimed that the productiveness of our Island orchards is equal in every respect to those of the dry belt, and the quality of the fruit is just as good. If we fall behind the growers of Okanagan and Wenatchee, it is because we have not yet taken up fruit-growing as a business in the thorough way that they have.

Thirty-five years ago a raft of oak logs was lost in Lake Erie. It was discovered frozen in the ice a few days ago. The raft, which was worth \$50,000 when lost is worth \$100,000

now, or in other words, the original value and 2 per cent. per annum interest.

FOREST CONSERVATION.

The Canadian Forestry Association has been in session in Fredericton, and the meeting was attended by a number of representative men. Several important papers were read. One of them dealt with forestry and game preservation, and the writer urged that in all future grants of crown lands the government ought to reserve a strip fifty feet wide on the banks of streams which should be kept perpetually in forest. He also urged the replanting of cleared land along streams. The object of this is to provide coverts for game and improve the fishing. Another paper urged the importance of using waste lumber for the manufacture of carpenter's goods, and products of that class. The writer of this paper described land clearing in Russia. He said that the roots are cut and the trees are then pulled down; and the law requires all tops and branches to be cleared away and burned before the first of May in each year. This is to prevent the spread of fires.

The results of the meeting are contained in the following resolutions: That the association endorses the project set forth in the report of the parliamentary committee of the house of commons recommending that the available forest land upon the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains be converted into a permanent forest reserve. That in the opinion of this forestry convention the government of the Dominion and of the various provinces should preserve to Canada all water powers within their boundaries, especially those in waters bordering on the neighboring republic.

That in the opinion of this forestry convention the Dominion government should pass more stringent laws to compel railways to Canada all water powers within their boundaries, especially those in waters bordering on the neighboring republic. That the convention urge upon the Dominion government and of the several provinces the necessity of preserving the timber lands at the head waters of all rivers and streams so as to maintain a regular flow of water.

Upon the proposal of G. G. Piche that it be recommended that the executive association consider:

1. The establishment in each province of separate branches to look after local problems.

2. The appointment of a committee of five members to study the possibility of having a universal log roll for the whole Dominion.

3. The publishing of the forestry journal monthly instead of quarterly, and also the use of large type.

That this convention recommend to the executive committee the advisability of appointing a committee of five to consider the fire laws of the several provinces and suggest legislation that in their opinion should effectively prevent and control forest fires.

That in the opinion of the Canadian Forestry Convention the time has arrived when in the interest of the conservation of our forests the federal and provincial governments should limit the cutting of lumber or pulp wood on Crown lands.

It is reported that the famous leaning tower of Pisa has been undermined by recent floods, and is likely to fall. No one knows whether that tower was built in its present position or if it attained it by accident.

For a city of brotherly love, Philadelphia is making a remarkable exhibition of herself. There is something lacking in government when nothing can be done to prevent outrages that lead to the killing and wounding of innocent people.

When the United States Tariff Commissioners approached the British Government in regard to tariff reductions with Canada they were advised to negotiate with Ottawa direct. This is a somewhat notable recognition of Canadian autonomy.

The opinion is expressed in St. Petersburg that China is preparing to go to war with Russia. A news correspondent says: "Russian officials say that China is arming against Russia, and profess to believe that war is possible within a decade. Alarm against the Chinese has replaced the expectation of a renewal of the war between Russia and Japan, which a few months ago created a veritable panic among the military authorities. The Novoe Vremya and other newspapers, which at that time predicted war in the spring, are now campaigning against China. They call attention to a series of economic measures undertaken by the Chinese Government, the result of which will be the forcing of Russians out of Manchuria."

WEILER BROS

Choose Your Spring Curtains And Curtainings

Today—When Choice Is Best

NO better time than right now to choose your new curtains or curtainings for the Spring re-arrangement of the home—now when the choice is best. We have just lately been adding many beautiful creations to the offerings of our curtain and drapery department, and our present selection of curtainings isn't equalled in the city.

Another new line to which special attention is drawn is a big shipment of "Ariston" lace curtains—a special weave of Nottingham lace. This is a double woven, unbreakable net curtain that comes in very handsome patterns. When you get these curtains you secure the finest quality possible.

Come in and let our drapery department discuss new curtains or new draperies. The services of experienced men may be employed without the slightest obligation on your part. Let them go into the matter of new "schemes" with you. Anyway, come in and see the new curtains and drapery materials.

Remnants Are Priced Low—to Clear

THE arrival of the big shipments of new curtainings is crowding our showrooms—makes it necessary to dispose of the many remnants of cretonnes and other drapery materials that accumulate in the course of a big season's business in this line.

To dispose of them in a hurry, we are making liberal reductions, offering them at 25 per cent off regular. These pieces measure from 3 to 5 yards each, and the patterns are our very best sellers—the only reason for reductions being the fact that they are remnants. These are ideal for cushions, bedroom curtains, loose covers, etc.

Come in today and choose from an excellent variety.

Spring Styles in New Carpets—Selecting Easy Now

THE pretty new Spring styles in our new carpets and rugs make the matter of choosing easy. We have something suitable for any room and any furnishings and something that will please you in the matter of price. These offerings mirror the newest ideas of the leading fashion centres, and are manufactured by the foremost makers in the world.

We guarantee every carpet or rug we sell—assure you absolute satisfaction. Our carpet prices compare favorably with prices quoted on carpets of inferior quality—they are lower when you consider the service they give. Come in and see ours before you invest a cent in carpets or rugs.

Smart Styles in Low-Priced Chamber Furniture

On Saturday we mentioned the arrival of a big shipment of bedroom furniture—two carloads—and today we are offering some of this on our third and fourth floors.

If you are on the lookout for something very stylish yet lightly priced, something well built and well finished in furniture for the bedroom, we commend these new pieces to your careful consideration.

Particularly desirable are the delightful dull mahogany finished pieces in those pleasing Colonial styles. In these we show chiffoniers, dressers, dressing tables, washstands, etc. These pieces are well built and finely finished, and are exceptionally low in price for such stylish pieces. By all means see them.

The West's Greatest Furniture House

WEILERS

After a Warm Bath

Do not stand upon cold tiles or oilcloth. Serious results may accrue from like carelessness. Nothing so hygienic, comfortable and useful for the bath room floor as one of our

New Cork Mats, Price Each \$3.75

Come in and take a look at them even if you do not wish to purchase. They're worth seeing.

CYRUS H. BOWES, CHEMIST Tel. 425 and 450. 1228 Government Street

MEMBERS SHOW SHORT TEMPER

Debate on Naval Bill in House Proves Too Much Strain on Patience Unseamly Incidents

LIBERAL MEMBERS TAKEN TO

Doubt Whether Long Talk Be Ended at Tonight's Urgent Whips on Sides

OTTAWA, March 8.—The debate is dying slowly, but it cannot now be long delayed whips are endeavoring to bring the first division on Mr. Monk's late amendment tomorrow night in the early hours of Thursday. The biggest vote of the day, and there are still twelve on the list, including such important performers as Mr. Emm and Mr. Carvell. It is not expected that the vote will be taken before 3 a. m. on Thursday. A whip has been issued on both sides and the biggest vote of the day is expected. Mr. Lemieux explained to the house that his much quoted speech in Canadian independence was at a gathering held to raise funds for the Dominion National. Four such were up for debate on that occasion, independence, status quo, the union and imperial federation. To Mr. Lemieux explained to the house that his much quoted speech in Canadian independence was at a gathering held to raise funds for the Dominion National. 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