Weekly Colonist

FRIDAY, MARCH 1ST, 1889.

A CONTRAST.

The manner in which the Provincial Government has treated the quartz miner is in striking contrast with the way in which he has been dealt by the Federal Government. The Provincial Government has given him every possible encouragement. It has spent large sums in making roads to the mining districts and in order to encourage capitalists to invest their money in the industry it places aliens on the same footing as regards claims as British subjects. It has enacted mining laws whose object it is to give the miner all the encouragement which can be extended to him by legislation. It has erected test works in order that he may know at once with the least possible expense the value of the ore he mines, and bonuses have been offered for the erection of smelting works. It has loaned large sums of money on easy terms, and has liberally bonused companies. The Federal Government on the other hand exercises its authority to place a heavy burden upon the shoulders of the miner whom the local government is doing its best to help. Instead of encouraging him it does all it can to discourage him. It subjects him to a heavy fine for having the presumption to attempt to extract gold from the mountains of British Columbia. After the Provincial Government has done all it can to induce the capitalist to find the gold that lies hidden in the rocks and mountains of the province, the Federal Government steps in and tells him that he cannot crush a pound of ore without paying it heavy tribute. We are greatly surprised to find that the authorities in Ottawa hesitate for a single moment to remove the duty that has been most improperly imposed on mining machinery. They ought to see that if the Provincial Government considers that the progress of the province requires it to make great efforts to encourage and assist the quartz mining industry, it is injuring it most seriously to burden that industry with an oppressive duty on the machinery necessary for its prosecution. The injury, too, they cannot help seeing, is a wanton one, for it is inflicted on a struggling industry, needing and deserving help, without benefiting in the slightest degree any other Canadian industry or interest. It is not pleasant to see the Federal Government pulling down what the Provincial Government is endeavoring to build up.

EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED.

The strike at the Union Mines again brings up for discussion, what are the rights of workmen, and what are the rights of employers? Have the workmen a right to dictate to their employers how they shall conduct their business—whom they shall employ and whom discharge, and what machinery they shall use; and has the employer a right to compel the workmen to give him his labor on any terms he may choose to offer? If both classes could come to a clear understanding as to the limits of the business of each, disputes would be less frequent and strikes would be fewer.

All must admit that both employer and workman are, in this country, free. One has no right to dictate authoritatively to the other. The employer is free to offer such wages as he thinks he can afford, and the workman is free to accept or reject that offer as he sees fit. The workman cannot compel the employer to invest his money in the way he thinks most favorable to his interests, neither can the employer compel the workman to work at labor which he does not like or when he is inclined to rest or play. They are both free to make any bargain that they can agree upon, and they are both, of course, in honesty and in law bound to carry out the terms of their agreement faithfully. So far, it would appear that both being agreed there is no room for dispute. Well, neither would there be if each respected the rights of the other. But this they find it hard to do. One class is continually trying to coerce the other. Not content with managing its own business as it sees fit, it endeavors to manage the affairs of the other. And then trouble is the result. Take this Comox difficulty as an instance. Some of the men who have been employed by the mining company, and who have nothing to complain of about the way in which it has carried out its agreement with them, require the company to discharge the Chinamen who are doing part of its work. Whose business is it to hire men and to manage the work of road making or mining? Is it the business of the company or the workmen? Did the manager of the company agree with the men who complain that he would not hire Chinamen? We do not hear that he made any such stipulation. If he does all that he promised when he engaged them, if he treats them in all respects as he agreed to, he performs his part of the contract, and when they interfere in the management of the business, they take upon themselves a duty altogether outside of their contract. Of course, if they want to make a new agreement and to have as one of its conditions that no Chinamen shall be employed by the company, they have a perfect right to do so, and if they determine not to go to work unless their terms are complied with, they have a right to do that, too. But then, again, the Company are perfectly free to accept or reject their terms. It will be for those who compose it to decide whether or not they will give their workmen a voice in the management of the business without their contributing towards the capital of the concern or taking any of its risks. For every one must see that if they permit the men to say who shall or shall not be employed, they really give them a share in the management of the business. If the workmen have a right to object to the employment of Chinamen they have a right to object to the employment of Italians, or Frenchmen, or Hungarians, or Belgians, or Americans, or, in fact, anyone but themselves and those whom they approve.

Now, though workmen have the right to refuse employment if work is given to men whom they do not like, is it wise for them to throw up a job because the employers insist upon hiring whom they please. Would any intelligent workman, if he had the management of a large concern, submit to placing so important a part of the management in the hands of his employees, who know nothing about his business and the conditions under which it is carried on. We are quite certain that there is not one in a thousand of them who, if he were an employer, would not insist upon managing his business in the way he thought best.

Are employers, as a class, likely to place such power in the hands of their workmen? Would it be wise even for the workmen's sake that they should do so? In these days of fierce competition the success of almost every business depends upon careful, prudent management. If a business is recklessly carried on, and if a careful eye is not kept upon every branch of expenditure, failure is the unavoidable result. But failure means to the workman loss of work and wages, and all the hardships and misery that these words convey. It is his interest, therefore, that the concern for which he works shall be prudently managed, and by men who understand their business. To give a voice in the control of the business to men who know nothing about it and whose only interest is to get as much out of it as they can is simply to invite disaster. When employers then refuse to allow workmen to dictate to them how they shall run their business, they are only doing what common prudence demands and what the true interests of the men themselves require. If the employer faithfully carries out his part of the agreement, the workman is unwise in demanding more than was mentioned in his bargain.

He can, as we have said, cease working if his terms are not complied with, but he must remember competition in labor is now quite as keen as competition in commodities. There are men eagerly looking for the work which he refuses, and who are willing to take it upon almost any terms. It makes very little matter in these days where the idle men are. They can be sent for without an hour's loss of time, and they can be speedily conveyed to where they are wanted. The telegraph and the railroad make distance a matter of little importance. A few weeks ago the street car drivers of New York went out on strike. They, too, wanted to control the management of the companies. They had many sympathizers. But the car companies were determined to retain the management of their business in their own hands. They would not yield to the demands of the men, and the citizens, generally believing that they were right, put up with the inconvenience of the want of street car accommodation cheerfully. The result was that after a little while the drivers had to give in. Men were found to take their places, and in spite of threats and reproaches, they went to work, and the striking drivers saw that if they did not yield there would be in a very short time no work for them to do. They lost a very large sum in wages, over $100,000 it is said, and it was a very poor consolation to them to find that they had inflicted a greater loss on the companies.

Reasonable men must see that if employers treat their workmen well and carry out their bargains to the letter, the workmen are foolish and standing in their own light when they take upon themselves to dictate to their employers how they shall conduct their business.

A PREPARATION NECESSARY.

The Speech from the Throne on the opening of the Imperial Parliament deserves and will obtain the most serious consideration, not only of the representatives of the nation, but of the nation itself. The language put in the mouth of the Soverign by her Ministers is always studiously moderate. Great care is taken to avoid anything that bears the appearance of exaggeration or overstatement. Every word of the Speech has been carefully weighed. There is not an expression in it that is not significant. And its framers exhaust their ingenuity in endeavoring to convey their meaning in the most moderate terms and in the most dispassionate manner consistent with clearness and earnestness. When, therefore, the Queen is made to say—"In view of the increased expenditure for war of other nations, it is necessary for us to increase the precautions hitherto taken for the protection of our commerce. My relations with foreign powers are at present friendly, but I have no right to assume that this condition is impossible to change." People may be sure that Her Majesty's Government are convinced that serious danger is impending. And it is not surprising that the Queen's advisers have come to this conclusion. Sources of information are open to them to which the ordinary observer has not access. Those who are privileged to see the inner workings of the great European governmental machine must have a clear idea of the significance of its movements than a mere spectator from the outside. But even the superficial observer must see that the European power which desires to hold its own must be prepared for attack at any moment. All the great nations of Europe have long been arming, and the work of preparing for war is still going on with unremitting energy. Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Russia have long resounded with the clang of military preparation. They have expended millions upon millions in the purchase of war material, and almost every man composing those nations is a trained soldier. They have, besides, gone on increasing their standing armies until they exceed in numbers anything that the world has ever seen. Europe may be said to be from the Ural Mountains to the Atlantic a great military camp. The navies, too, of these nations have been greatly increased of late years. Many of them own ships of war of the most formidable kind. How can a European nation which has much to lose be careless of her defences at such a time? There is no knowing what combinations may be made or how soon Great Britain may be called upon to defend all she holds dear. It is believed that with her present armament she is far from being invulnerable. The men in the best position to judge of the requirements of the crisis believe that it is necessary for the British nation to place itself in such a state of defense that attack, come from what quarter it may, need not be feared. The European volcano may burst at any moment, and it may be too late to prepare when the foe is at the door. The Queen's Speech will no doubt rouse the spirit of the nation and the money that may be required to make it invincible, however large the amount, will no doubt be forthcoming.

THE INDIANS.

The Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the year ending 31st December, 1888, gives the patient reader much information relative to the Indian population of Canada. We find from it that the number of Indians in all the Provinces and Territories is estimated at 69,554. This comparatively small number of aboriginal inhabitants is scattered over a wide extent of territory. There are in—

British Columbia	17,922
Northwest Territories	29,940
Ontario	16,903
Quebec	6,731
New Brunswick	1,291
Nova Scotia	2,145
Prince Edward Island	319
Total	69,554

The condition of by far the greater number of the Indians is exceedingly backward. But the progress made by some of the tribes, both in the East and the West, show that the Indian is improvable, and there are indications that, if the proper means are used, he will not, as some hastily conclude, be in time civilized off the face of the earth. Some of the Indian communities in the East have attained a fair degree of civilization. In the words of the report: "Indications are not wanting of nearer approach to that condition which, when reached, will merge them in the general population of the country, breaking asunder the very slight barriers which now separate many of them from the rest of the community." They cultivate the land, they build houses, they own cattle, they have learned handicraft trades, and many of them are fairly well educated. The object of those who have undertaken to elevate the Indian is to change his social condition and bring it as near as possible to the white man's standard. If they can dissolve the tribal bond and abolish the practises of which it is the origin, they think that they will do much to bring the Indians within the pale of civilization. In order to do this they are cultivating in him a love of property. They wish to make him feel a pride in the possession of land. For this purpose, both in Canada and the United States, they are trying to do away with the policy of settling Indians on reserves which belong to the whole community but to which the individual has no claim. They are encouraging the Indian to become the sole owner of the plot of land he cultivates and on which he has built his dwelling. And Indians are, in several places, beginning to see the advantage of possessing land in severalty. This desire, it is hoped, will spread and be one of the principal influences to induce them to abandon a wild and wandering life and to adopt the ideas and the practices of civilized men.

But the civilizing agent which the friends of the Indian principally depend upon is the education of the young. The Commissioner says:

"It is submitted and earnestly pressed that the most essential lever for the elevation of the race would be the adoption of a vigorous policy of imparting to the young a thorough, practical knowledge of mechanical arts and of agriculture, as well as of other employments, including a systematic method of ordering and managing their domestic affairs—in short, a complete training in industries and domestic economy."

There is no question that if the Indian is civilizable this is the most effective way of civilizing him. If he is taken young and taught to appreciate the advantages of civilization, the chances are that he will be much the superior of his brother who remains uneducated, and that he will be the means of elevating in some degree those of his race with whom he comes in contact. We are glad to see that the education to be extended to the Indians is to be of the right sort. It is to be a practical education. The position which the pupil is to occupy after he leaves school is to be kept continually in sight. He is to be taught to work with his hands so that when he is sent into the world he will be able to earn his bread by engaging in some useful and steady occupation. We see, too, that while he is serving his apprenticeship to civilization the Indian educationists think that the pupil should be separated as much as possible from old and degrading associations. They prefer boarding schools to day schools. They want to have the child all to themselves for a few years. This seems to be wise, but whether it is practicable or not we are not in a position to decide.

It is to be hoped that the Government will take measures to preserve the young Indian whom it has educated with such expense and care from demoralizing influences, which have proved so fatal to half-civilized, and, for the matter of that, to wholly civilized, peoples. The power to prevent the introduction of intoxicating drinks into Indian communities should be most rigorously enforced. It will be disheartening to see the promising Indian student and workman degenerating into an idle, worthless vagabond through the influence of strong drink. The fire-water has ever been the red-man's worst enemy, and it is as seductive and as dangerous now as ever it was. Unless means are taken to keep it out of the reach of the Indian until he has learned the difficult lesson of self-restraint, all the efforts to elevate him and to develope him into what he is capable of becoming will be vain. The work of transforming the untutored savage into a steady, useful member of the civilized community is necessarily a slow one, and the philanthropist must be satisfied with small results, and he must not be disheartened if he witnesses, after all his pains, what appears to him to be retrogression. Slips will occur and there will be frequent backslidings, but if on the whole some advance is made he must not relax in his efforts. It seems to us that the Report before us contains evidence of the advancement of the native tribes sufficient to encourage the Government to proceed hopefully with the good work it has in hand.

EXTENSION OF CITY LIMITS.

It is understood that the city barristers have expressed the opinion that Mayor Grant's ruling on the division on the resolution having respect to the extension of the city limits, is the correct one. We are not by any means convinced that such is the case, for looking at it from a common sense standpoint, we are compelled to believe that six represents two-thirds of nine, and therefore a two-third majority of the council of ten where the chairman is also favorable. However, we trust that the mystic number of seven will vote for the resolution at the next sitting of the board, and thus meet the point raised in order to defeat the carrying out of so needed a change. It is rumored that petitions will be presented to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to-day seeking the formation of municipalities beyond the city's boundaries. If these selfish schemes are consummated, the members of the aldermanic board who have been the means of injuring the city by delaying the passage of the extension resolution, will have a great deal to answer for. The effect would be but slightly felt this year, but succeeding years would demonstrate more clearly the folly, selfishness and short-sightedness of their action. We believe that if a vote was taken nine-tenths of the ratepayers of Victoria would endorse the extension of the limits.

THE EXTENSION QUESTION.

The question of extending the limits has been before the people of Victoria for too short a time for them to thoroughly consider the many urgent reasons there are for the change. There is one point, however, which should be sufficient to induce them to favor the extension. If municipalities are formed just on our borders, it will not only mean that improvements will be slow, and thus to a certain extent retard the progress of the city, but when the time comes when it is actually necessary to annex a portion of the municipality to the city, it can only be done with the consent of the former, and perhaps at a very great expense. It cost Montreal hundreds of thousands of dollars to take in Hochelage and other villages surrounding that city, and, if municipalities are formed on Victoria's borders, in five years it may prove a source of large expense to extend the city's boundaries. Man other reasons can be quoted, but we trust the interests that are at stake will induce a unanimous vote of the council to favor the present proposed extension of the city's limits. If the proposal is not carried out, and municipalities are formed as intended in the interest of landed proprietors, a year or two will demonstrate the injustice and injury which has been done Victoria by the failure of the council to carry out what we are convinced is the earnest desire of nine-tenths of its citizens.

NOT EXCITABLE.

The men who are endeavoring to get up a religious contest in the Dominion have been trying to induce the Rev. George M. Grant to join the fray. The Rev. gentleman is clear-headed and far-sighted. He does not feel disposed to aid those who are bound to stir up religious strife in this peaceful country. He wants to be sure of the righteousness of the cause which the agitators are advocating before he consents to aid them. He has only recently returned from a long visit to Australia and Asia and he is not very well acquainted with all that happened in the Dominion while he was away. He wants more information about the Jesuits Estates Act before he takes upon himself to pronounce upon the wisdom of the course which those are pursuing who desire to make the refusal of the Government of the Dominion to disallow it the grounds of an extensive politico-religious movement. He says to them who are asking him to join them:

"Even if the case be exactly as you represent, I fail to see the perfect wisdom or righteousness of the action you propose to take." He then goes on to say: "As far as I understand, it is proposed that a Protestant alliance, with political objects should be formed. Whether such an alliance be called Dominion, Evangelical or Protestant, its object would be to array one corporate religious vote against another. The effect of that would be to divide the community into two hostile factions—one Roman Catholic, the other Protestant—and thus to establish in Canada a state of things that has been the curse of Ireland. All history teaches us to dread ecclesiastical interference in the political region, no matter by what high-sounding name the ecclesiastical personage, court or body is known.

"In no action then to be taken and no organization to be attempted against what you call 'gross and palpable folly or injustice'? No one would say so. But action must be taken by us as citizens, not as members of this or that religious body. It is as much the interest of the Roman Catholic as of the Episcopal, Methodist or Presbyterian citizen that no political folly or injustice shall be done in Canada. Every man, however, is attached less or more passionately to his own Church, and if other Churches attack it he feels himself in honor bound to defend it, even when he suspects that he is on the wrong side. But as fellow citizens we are all in one boat. Whatever hurts the boat hurts all alike. Let us, therefore, enlist the sympathies of all in stopping leaks, repairing fractures and putting down encroachments or attempted mutiny on the part of any."

No one who knows Principal Grant questions the soundness of either his patriotism or his Protestantism. If either as a Canadian or as a member and minister of the Presbyterian Church he felt it to be his duty to join this new alliance, he would do so without calculating the consequences or counting the cost. That he does not do so on the representation of those who were best able to place the views of the aggressive politico-religionists in the most favorable light shows that in the opinion of at least one able and thoroughly patriotic Canadian, who is also an eminent Presbyterian clergyman, those who are now trying to raise a No-Popery howl in Ontario are not justified in the action they are taking. Mr. Grant, no doubt, will get soundly abused for the stand he has taken and the views he has expressed, but he is not the kind of man to be deterred from doing what he believes to be right by the loud and fierce talk of those with whom he differs.

DAILY MARKING.

The controversy on the subject of daily marking in schools has become rather lively. The opponents of the practice are endeavoring to create the impression that it is unnecessary and that it is not approved by the teachers of the province as a body. Some strong language is used by one or two of the disputants which is quite uncalled for. The object of the system is to increase the efficiency of the schools and to keep both the Government and the parents informed as to the progress made by each individual pupil and by the several schools as a whole. This object is, without doubt, a good one, and it is only by giving the daily marking system a fair trial that it can be ascertained whether it is calculated to attain it or not. Scolding the Government, the principal officials of the Department of Education or the teachers will not help any one to arrive at an intelligent conclusion as to its merits. It will, indeed, have the effect of prejudicing some of the teachers against the system and prevent their doing it justice.

A great deal is said about the loss of time which daily marking occasions. The school hours, it is argued, should be spent in teaching and not in marking. There is much apparent force in this objection. The zealous, conscientious teacher hates to lose a moment. He or she finds the school hours short enough to do the work of teaching in without taking any of it to do this daily recording. But need any of the teaching time be really lost in keeping the record of marks? There is nothing to hinder the teacher having in his hand a properly prepared list of the pupils in his class and noting with his pencil the quality of each child's performance as he recites. This can best be done while the work is going on. The fact that the teacher stands, pencil in hand, to record how the pupil does his work keeps both scholars and teacher on the *qui vive*, and prevents them droning over their work. Dullness and inattention are the teacher's two greatest enemies. If the pupils get listless and inattentive—which they will be sure to do—if the teacher is not wide awake and ready to note any mistake or breach of discipline that is committed, very little real progress will be made in the school. We think we can see how this marking can be made a means of keeping the school lively and in good working trim. We repeat that there need be no time lost during school hours in keeping a record of how the pupils acquit themselves. All that the teacher has to do is to have on what we may call a "blotter" the names of the members of the different classes in regular order and jot down as each recites his judgment on the work done. There may be other and better ways of doing the marking without loss of time, but this, we think, would be effective. Then it would not take long after school hours to transfer the record on the blotter to the recitation record, with which the teacher is supplied by the government. The amount of writing to be done is very small, and the calculations are of the easiest and simplest kind. We think that if the teacher gives this system an honest trial, and goes about it with a cheerful mind he will find that keeping the record will be a benefit to himself as well as to the pupils. We use the masculine pronoun for we have not the audacity to offer advice to the ladies.

As to taking the monthly record off the recitation records, this is a very simple matter. It takes time, of course, but the teacher has much more than sufficient time to do it in without trenching upon the hours that should be devoted to teaching. We are decidedly of opinion that the business of daily marking can be easily done by the teacher who goes about it systematically without losing five minutes in a week of the time which should be devoted to the business of teaching pure and simple.

Will the teachers permit us to add another consideration? It is often said that the man, or the woman, who has spent some years of his or her life, in teaching, is a useless creature if required to turn his or her attention to any other business. Teachers have not been trained to doing work which is part mechanical and part intellectual, systematically. Now, keeping these marking tables will be good practice in this kind of work. It will be a kind of book-keeping, and if teachers made is a duty of doing it promptly, regularly and neatly, they will find themselves greatly benefited by the work if it ever should have to be their duty to keep other kinds of records. We do not hide from the teachers that there is work in this daily marking system, but it is work that they are paid to do, and work that will do them good rather than harm. We need not say that the greater part of it should be done out of the regular school hours. We believe that the teacher who honestly tries to work out this system and to perform, with regard to it, all that the Government requires, will, in a very short time, realize the truth of the text that "In all labor there is profit."

An Apt Quotation

From a letter by Mrs. Sullivan, 124 West Ave., Hamilton, Ont.: "After trying a number of medicines for liver complaint, from which I suffered for years, I bought two bottles of Burdock Blood Bitters and found it a complete cure. My house is never without it." tts

The town of Guerneville, Cal., has been entirely destroyed by fire. Loss $400,000.

Poison Ivy Eruption.

For poison ivy eruption and for all burns, sore throat, rheumatism, etc., Mr. O. W. Wood, of Hall's Bridge, Ont., advises the use of Hagyard's Yellow Oil, which has been in use in his family for years. He regards it as a perfect cure. tts

TARIFF CHANGES.

We are glad to see that Sir John Macdonald did not give the delegation of Ontario millers who asked for an addition of fifty cents a barrel to the duty on flour much encouragement. He said very truly that the people believed that if an additional duty were placed on flour the money would come out of their pockets. A tax on bread is a tax of the worst kind. If Canada raises more wheat than its inhabitants can consume, it will not be an importer of either wheat or flour to any great extent. No one thinks of sending coals to Newcastle or Nanaimo. If the people of any part of Canada are obliged to import their bread they should be able to get it as cheap as it can be procured. Why should the miner or the fisherman or the mechanic of British Columbia be compelled to pay fifty or sixty cents additional for a barrel of flour in order that Ontario millers may get rich more quickly. What have the Ontario millers done for them? Sir John Macdonald had, we have no doubt, good warrant for saying, that the British Columbia members would be opposed to the proposed increase of duty on flour. They had most probably been canvassed on the subject, and had expressed their opinion of the increased flour tax in pretty plain terms.

The modesty of the managers of the Vancouver smelting works in asking for an increase of duty on lead cannot be sufficiently admired. They have as yet produced no lead. No one has the slightest idea of what the quality of the lead which the Vancouver works may produce will be. They can give no guarantee that one single pound of it will be such as can be used in the different canning establishments of the Dominion. None but the very purest lead can be used in the canneries. If the lead produced by the Vancouver smelting works is pure and can be used in the canneries without danger, there will be a large demand for it in all parts of the Dominion. But it is most unreasonable to burden interests in which millions of dollars are invested with an additional duty on lead for the chance of benefiting a single smelting establishment on which only a few thousand dollars have been expended. When the Vancouver smelting works have been in operation for a while, and when the quality and the quantity of their lead product is well known, it will then be time enough for those who manage them to ask for a protective duty, but in their present stage of development it would be in the highest degree imprudent and unjust to other interests to grant their request.

QUEBEC'S FINANCES.

The Finance Minister of the Quebec Provincial Government was able to make a splendid showing for the past year. The revenue exceeded the expenditure by $373,000. It was a treat for the representatives of the people of Quebec to find that there was a surplus in the Treasury. They have had nothing but deficits for many years. But the present prosperity is more apparent than real. The Government has been most industrious in collecting its debts. It has secured large sums that were due it and these sums have swelled the revenue to an abnormal extent. If the Government had to depend upon its ordinary sources of revenue there would this year be a deficit instead of a surplus. This business of debt collecting will soon become unprofitable and then Quebec will have to try to make the year's expenditure and the year's taxes and other sources of revenue balance. This will test Mr. Mercier's financial ability. It is easy getting on when there are big windfalls to pick up, but it will be harder work when there will be nothing to fall back upon. Mr. Mercier's pet scheme of increasing the provincial income was by a forced consolidation of the public debt. He expected to have nothing to do but to tell the creditors of the province who hold its bonds bearing five and six per cent. interest, and having many years still to run, that they must change them for bonds of equal amount bearing a lower rate of interest or take payment of the bonds at their face in cash. He procured the passage of a law containing a compulsory clause to this effect, but the Federal Government's ideas of public honesty were somewhat different from Mr. Mercier's, and the Act was disallowed. So Mr. Mercier cannot make the large saving he expected at the expense of the public creditors. The people of Quebec are impatient of taxation, so the prospect ahead of the Finance Minister when there are no more debts to collect is not inviting. But just now everything is lovely with the Quebec Government as far as money matters are concerned.

THE DAILY MARKING CONTROVERSY.

We reproduce the following vigorous article on this question from the Vancouver *World* of the 19th inst:

Some of the teachers of this Province—their number is very few—seem to be actuated by a desire to worry the educational department as much as lies in their power. Fortunately they are only a handful, and their efforts to start an agitation have been quite futile. It is generally found that such a cabal as this is initiated by some "crank" filled with a spirit of malice toward the powers that be. Whether it is so in this case or not the little coterie which is raising its voice against the legislation of the country best knows. However that may be, it will be found on careful investigation that there is no good reason for the hostile attitude they assume. The question of daily marking is one which scribblers in the press, who possibly would be better employed in attending to their duties as preceptors of the young, are very much concerned with at the present time. Most people who have given the matter any consideration will agree with us that this is the only correct method of recording the character of the recitation of prescribed lessons. The test has been had, and has been everywhere found to be the only one which has worked satisfactorily. It occupies but little of the teacher's time, unless he is a drone of the first water; and a monthly report sent to the parent based upon his record is as near an approach to accuracy as can be attained. If he does his duty he can give the parent an excellent idea, from the month's marks, of the progress his child is making. Daily marking from this point of view is a necessity, since without this systematic record the report for the month would necessarily depend upon guess work or on the whim of the teacher. It would be simply impossible for any man or woman, unless possessed of an extraordinary memory, to gauge the standing of the large number of pupils under his care, unless by some such aid. This fact must be patent to everybody. We imagine that the principal opponents of the system are those who from indolence are unwilling to devote one day in each month to adding up the daily record, notwithstanding the fact that they labor, unlike most other mortals, but five days out of seven. We believe we are quite within the truth when we say that opposition to the present system is only confined to a few beginners in the teaching profession, who bumptiously imagine they are better judges of the methods to be employed than those who have spent a lifetime in the schoolroom, and in the work of education in all its various branches. When these wiseacres gain such a degree of knowledge, it will be quite time for them to give the public the benefit of their views. There seems to be a prevailing opinion that those teachers who have, perhaps thoughtlessly, been led into attacking the Educational Department and the Legislature, and all interested in the promulgation and carrying out of the educational interests of the province, are making a very great mistake. They would unquestionably be acting with wisdom if they ceased their connection with those misguided persons—some of whom have nothing to lose in the matter—who are the authors of this "tempest in a tea pot." Daily marking is an excellent provision, since it stimulates effort, indicates the achievements of the pupil and enables the teacher to make reliable records and reports. Those who are interested in school work in British Columbia, parents more especially, would very much regret any change which would impair the present admirable system.

SAANICH GRIEVANCES.

To the Editor:—I observed an article in the Victoria *Daily Times* of the 21st inst., in which a letter written by me to the late Henry McHugh, Esq., dated "Sept. 5th, 1884," is reproduced. Very much as I dislike at the present time to in any way interfere in a question that appears to be used for political purposes, I think under the circumstances it would be as well for me to explain the nature of Mr. McHugh's grievance at that time. Every resident in Saanich is no doubt well aware that Mr. McHugh has a road to his farm, running nearly the full length of his land and known as the old Saanich road, and which was improved through my representations some years ago.

The late Mr. McHugh expressed himself as satisfied so far as that part of the road was concerned, but claimed that he was also entitled to an outlet to the Saanich road through Mr. Rey's section, this part of the road having been closed by the Hon. Mr. Walkem when C. C. of L. and W. by petition from a number of residents in the neighborhood. Mr. McHugh protested against this, and as one of the representatives for the district for a number of years, Mr. McHugh very naturally complained to me and to the late Hon. Mr. Smithe as well. As Mr. Smithe and myself were both desirous of remedying a long-standing complaint and no person then residing on the land, Mr. Smithe during an interview about that time (Sept. 1884), said that if Mr. McHugh made application for the reopening of the old highway under section 63 of the Land Act, 1884, that so far as he was concerned he would offer no objection. I thought this very satisfactory, hence my letter to the late Mr. McHugh of that date. But it turned out that Mr. McHugh did not want the old Saanich road, but another side road near by on the same section, made and used for a time by Messrs. Poole and Towey in 1871 or '72, when Wm. Jackson owned the land. This Poole and Towey road, so far as I am aware, has never been declared a public road, and as a continuous resident of Saanich for nineteen years, I have no recollection of any road party doing any work on it. In consequence of this change on the part of Mr. McHugh and of the return of Mr. Rey and his family from Nicola Valley to reside on the land in the fall of 1884, and who objected to the road being made a public one, and also on account of his 100 acre section being cut up so much with roads, more so than any other in the district, the matter dropped. In all fairness to the late chief commissioner, Mr. Smithe, it would be as well for me to state that he visited the late Mr. McHugh twice in order that the road question might be amicably settled. And as a result Mr. Rey generously consented to allow Mr. McHugh to use the Poole & Towey road at all times so long as the gates were closed at either end. Since then the government has made two new roads to the boundary of the McHugh property, in addition to the old Saanich road, as well as being allowed the use of Poole & Towey's road, making in all four roads to that much talked of property. In conclusion permit me to say that I very much regret that Mr. Gore's veracity has been impugned in connection with this road question, for during the six years that I did business with that gentleman in the Lands and Works office, I always found him courteous, truthful and reliable in all his statements appertaining to Victoria district affairs.

R. F. John.

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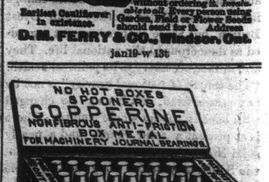

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