Weekly Colonist.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1886.

SUPERIORITY OF THE BRITISH FLEET.

Now that there is every probability of a great war the powers are all looking to their fleets. There can be little doubt, notwithstanding all the continental "bluster," that Great Britain still is "the mistress of the seas." It would have been strange, when her peculiar position is taken into account, if she allowed herself to fall from that proud eminence. It is, then, cheering and satisfactory to be told by the Manchester Guardian that the fact that our new armored ships of large size are swifter than the corresponding class of vessels in the French fleet is no longer a matter of controversy. Our superiority in this respect has been acknowledged in an official paper recently submitted to the French chambers. France has no ironclad which can be driven at a higher speed than 16 knots an hour; even the ships which are now building are not expected to exceed, if they reach, that rate. Our latest ships are all capable of doing more than the French maximum. The "Admiral" class, as well as the Imperieuse and Warspite, have been designated as seventeen-knot ships, and so far as the trials have gone there is no reason to apprehend that the actual result will fall far, if at all, short of the constructor's calculations. The Benbow passed through her official trials last week, and it is satisfactory to learn not only that the engines worked smoothly throughout, but that the speed attained exceeded the estimated rate. In the natural draught trial the mean speed was 16.3 knots, while with the forced draught the ship did 17¼ knots. With regard to at least one quality, therefore, the Benbow is an ironclad of the very first rank. As is well known, the fighting value of the Benbow, and indeed of all the ships of the "Admiral" type, has been freely criticised. There are authorities who pronounce them costly blunders, and it may very well be that Sir N. Barnaby and other marine architects have devised or might be able to devise ships capable of offering a stouter resistance to an enemy's fire. But when all is said the Benbow remains one of the most formidable engines of war possessed by any power. A ship with a displacement of 10,000 tons, protected (if only partially) by steelfaced side armor varying in thickness from 14 inches to 18 inches, carrying an armament which includes two 110-ton breechloading guns, and which in addition to all this can steam at the rate of 17½ knots an hour, can never, in the hands of competent officers and well-trained men, be anything but a battleship of the first importance. The doubtful point is whether the next great naval war may not clearly demonstrate that in applying themselves mainly to the construction of these magnificent ships the maritime powers have been pursuing a mistaken policy. We may come yet to smaller ships with internal instead of side protection, and carrying lighter but still effective guns. Admiral Aube believes that the time has already arrived for thus reconstructing the fleets of the world. Even in England it has been decided to abandon for the present the policy of laying down new ironclads of large dimensions, and the swift cruiser and torpedo vessel are for the time the favorite types. But for the final decision we shall in all probability have to await the experiences and lessons of a great war.

THE BEHRING'S SEA FIASCO.

It is understood that orders have gone forward to Sitka to release any prisoners held under sentences for illegal sealcatching, and to remit any fines imposed. The order probably came too late to help the imprisoned captains, most of whom had served out their sentences at the time it arrived; but it will put a stop to further seizures and prosecutions. The exclusive right of the Alaska Commercial Company to the fisheries on the islands of St. George and St. Paul, and in the territorial waters surrounding those islands, is indisputable under the lease; but it is not likely that any future administration will regard it as entitling the company to the ownership of all the waters of Behring Sea. Whether this will not practically extinguish the monopoly, the future will show. The lesson will be a dear one in any event for the company, but has come none too soon. One result will be the increased number of sealing vessels in the northern seas next season, and Victoria will, it is believed, send out a comparatively large fleet. Having no fear of the Corwin before their eyes it may be anticipated that they will give a good account of themselves. It would seem as if some compensation should be made the captains who have unjustly been made to suffer, and we presume they will make such a demand in due time. The position taken was palpably absurd, as we pointed out at the time, and was nothing short of a gross outrage. If one consequence of the decision is to break up the monopoly it will be a fortunate thing that they took the steps they did. Good will come out of evil.

THE END OF THE SOUDAN WAR.

For several months past the Soudan has occupied but a small share of public attention. Except for an occasional foray into the surrounding country by the small garrison at Suakim, or more or less successful raids of bands of Osman Digma's predatory troops on the cattle and other abstractable property of the peacefully inclined tribes in the neighborhood, a condition of comparative tranquility has reigned. Recent correspondence of the London Times conveys the gratifying intelligence that this state of affairs is now likely to be permanent and that the wild Arab uprising, which it cost so much British blood and valor to check, is being finally dissipated by other less costly, but not less effectual influences. The remarkable change which has been effected can be the better appreciated by recalling the condition of the country around Suakim not longer ago than May last. Osman Digma, outside the walls of the town, was practically master of the situation. He was repeatedly reported killed, but he appeared to have as many lives as a cat. Repeated attempts were made to disperse his troops, but they proved as effectual as fighting a phantom. Occasional conflicts between the Arabs and the British troops resulted in a good deal of bloodshed and glory, but little else. The Arabs were not subdued and their raids were continued under the very guns of the forts. When matters were in this position a new policy was adopted which has been attended with the most marked success. All the British troops remaining were withdrawn and their places taken by an Egyptian garrison, under the command of an English officer of engineers. The latter, who was appointed governor-general, at once proceeded to make it known to the Soudanese that the government had decided not to endeavor any further either with men or with money to put an end to hostilities, and that if they wished the country pacified and trade re-opened they must take steps in that direction themselves. It speedily became apparent that a large proportion of the tribes were in favor of peace and a renewal of trade. Osman Digma organized two forces and sent one north and the other south to punish tribes which had decided in favor of peace. One of these armies was beaten and the other prudently beat a retreat, without having attempted to accomplish the object with which it had been sent out. From this point Osman Digma's power began to wane. A successful raid made by a friendly tribe induced others. A number of the sheikhs who were with Osman wrote expressing their desire for peace, and asking to be allowed to negotiate with that object. Others, with a keen eye to the main chance, enquired whether there was a reward outstanding for Osman's sagacious old head. Within little more than a month the whole country around Suakim had been cleared of rebels; a market was opened; it was possible for a single individual to ride about without danger, and industries which had been at a standstill for two years were re-opened. The tribes now began to close in on Tamai, Osman Digma's stronghold, and meanwhile English and Egyptian cruisers watched the coast closely to prevent him from getting any fresh supplies. Osman soon began to find himself, as the Times correspondent expressively put it, in a position "very much like a rat in a hole." He accordingly summoned his few remaining followers and informed them, first, that an army of 4,000 men was marching to their relief; and, second, that circumstances required his presence at Khartoum. He then decamped, accompanied by a faithful few, and Tamai, shortly after, fell into the hands of the friendly natives. The correspondent concludes:

"Nothing shows more distinctly the collapse of the movement throughout the Soudan than the fact that even the hardy imagination of Osman could not venture to promise more than 4,000 men. A year or two ago he could truthfully boast of his actual 10,000 present, and his imagination at its feeblest would have spoken of 40,000 in the distance. But even Digma's inventive faculty is limited by what he deems the credulity of his supporters. They may believe in 4,000, but the days are past when he could expect them to believe in larger figures. It must be admitted that even the reduced figure does not seem to have been easily digestible, for up to latest advices deserters come in daily, and the rebellion of the Eastern Soudan will, with continued good management, soon become a memory of the past. And how has this been accomplished? Not by waste of English blood or treasure, not by indiscriminate slaughter of the righteous champions of freedom, but by allowing the blameless Ethiopian to settle his own quarrels in his own way, and by the moral influence of common sense. No English or Egyptian soldier has been employed, the native tribes have been offered, not peace or war, but plenty of starvation at their own option. There has been attached no humiliating condition, no inhuman penalty, unless it is one to refuse to barbarians the means whereby alone they can continue their interneciae slaughter. The result is that the natural trading instinct—which is but the instinct of a wish to live—has risen superior to the fanatical instinct, which is but the instinct to kill."

The Last of the Mechanics' Institute.

To the Editor:—Thursday, Nov. 25th, in the year of grace, 1886, marks an epoch in the history of our city, as being the day on which the above institution was brought to a final close; the auctioneer's hammer serving as its funeral knell, its various properties, save and except the library being sold, and its rooms left empty, causing the institute that had maintained its position through many a trial bordering on a quarter of a century to become a thing of the past. Its dissolution will create a void that must be filled up if our people are to keep pace with the intelligence of the age.

Doubtless to a considerable portion of our citizens, the loss of the Mechanics' Institute with its opportunities to furnish intelligence of the current literature of the day is a matter of supreme indifference, inasmuch as the well stocked libraries of their homes, combined with subscription to periodical literature, and access to the clubs furnishes abundantly all they may require.

But outside of such highly favored individuals there are large numbers, and amongst those numbers, many invested with the franchise power involved in the franchise who have not the means for enjoying such privileges, and yet to whom it is highly desirable that such facilities for obtaining information should be afforded to qualify them to become good and useful citizens. It is just possible that the temporary arrangement of the city council may in the meantime meet a requirement; but but any such notions as have been mentioned as for the Mechanics' Institute in its new form to be in connection with a public market, is a miscomprehension of what is wanted, and would end in a failure. It is to be hoped the city council will seek the aid of the provincial government for a money grant for the erection of a suitable edifice in some central part of the city, so that at no distant date our citizens may have an institution of which they would be proud, and for which aid from the legislature Victoria, as the capital, is entitled. Surely, it cannot be said, there is no necessity for such influences being in operation, for while on every hand our city is progressive, in the habits, tastes and language of that portion of the community called the people, there is furnished abundant evidence of such an institution being wanted as herein alluded to, and which it is the bounden duty of the government and all interested in the welfare of our city to recognize and to afford the necessary assistance for its accomplishment. W. K. B.

The Proposed Steamers.

To the Editor:—I do not think Captain Irving is justified in building steamers outside of this province. The screw boat he mentions will be wrecked before a side-wheel boat, other things being equal, in navigating the Gulf. Side-wheel boats are more suitable for the navigation, being more manageable than long, narrow screws, and they are more roomy, more suitable for passenger traffic. Very large boats are not required yet by the traffic. Three or four wooden side-wheelers about the size of the Princess Louise would place the company in a position to carry all the traffic there will be between Vancouver, New Westminster and Victoria for some years to come.

These wooden side-wheelers could be built at Victoria, of British Columbia wood, and their boilers could be made here also. The engines, low pressure vertical beam, can be bought at Sorel and Quebec for one-fourth the cost of new engines. I know there are a large number of marine beam engines to be had cheap at these two St. Lawrence River towns, ranging from 30-inch cylinders to 45 inches and more. I know one 57-inch x 10-foot stroke (Athenian); another 47 x 10 (Abyssinian); another 45 x 10 (Hero), and I could name others of 40 inches and more, that could be bought low. The replacing of sailing vessels by steamships in the Montreal trade, have caused a number of side wheel tugs of great power to be of no further use, and their engines could be used to great advantage in British Columbia waters. Parties here wanting such engines should write to the Richelieu & Ontario Navigation Co., at Montreal, or to the St. Lawrence Towboat Co., Quebec, instead of spending their money at San Francisco. I think the old time dependence of Victoria on San Francisco should cease. It is a relic of a vanished time Let us keep our money in Canada and support Canada, not a foreign city.

An Old St. Lawrence Steamboat Man.

Victoria, Nov. 24th, 1886.

Drainage.

To the Editor:—Your short article on the above subject reminds me that while in England I noticed workmen putting down in the middle of the road vitrified pipes 12 inches in diameter. On inquiry I was informed they were drain pipes, into which smaller drains from the houses connected, and these were the only pipes used in that town of 25,000 inhabitants. If such simple means will do in England why not adopt the same method here. The whole business could be managed by the corporation and would be effective and cheap, no expensive or elaborate scheme being necessary. I do not wish to go into the subject at length, not having the time, but merely give my actual experience briefly.

Edward White.

Victoria, Nov. 24, 1886.

The Victoria Jail.

To the Editor:—Before the grand jury finishes its labors I hope it will pay, not a cursory, but a searching visit to the jail and call for a list of the rations supplied to the unfortunate prisoners, as it has been rumored that those at hard labor receive for their evening meal a cup of cold water and a piece of bread, tea not being allowed on account of the expense. Let the grand jury see, if such is the case, or if such was the case, for tea may now be given, as the cold water system may have caused an undue amount of sickness among the prisoners. Let the beds also be looked at and closely inspected, for I believe that hard wire mattresses without covering beyond a thin blanket between the body and the hard wire, is what the prisoners have to sleep on.

If this is true, such beds must be a process of slow torture instead of the rest the poor unfortunates ought to have after their hard day's work in the open air and their frugal meal. Taxpayer.

Victoria, Nov. 25, '86.

A large assortment of Christmas Cards than ever before at T. N. Hibben & Co.'s. ‡

Dr. Helmcken's Letters.

To the Editor:—Several statements made by Dr. Helmcken in his correspondence on the Indian question in our columns, if taken in the usual significance of such language and read in the light of the original documents, will place the Doctor in the front rank of "misleaders." In your weekly issue, Nov. 5th, he says: "Some five and thirty years ago Vancouver island had a government of its own and in dealing with the Indian question had to make a policy suited to the Indians and local conditions." He then proceeds to give what can only be called a caricature of said policy, leaving out all reference to the Indian title—the very matter now in issue—and adds: "Such has been the Indian policy for the past 35 years, almost from the foundation of the colony. During this period Vancouver Island and the mainland became united in one colony. The Indian policy of Vancouver island was put in force on the mainland also, when the united colonies became part and parcel of Canada. This system was unaltered and to-day is the ruling policy of British Columbia, and must be submitted to by Metlakahtlans and their misleaders as well as by other Indian tribes. British Columbia has not, during the past 35 years, acknowledged any Indian title to land save that given them by, may I say, their conquerors—not by sword, but by civilization and commerce." Again, in the weekly issue of Nov. 12th: "Please, remember the Indian policy of British Columbia is not an accident—it was formulated by that 'great and good man,' Sir James Douglas, and put into practice with the knowledge of her majesty's government, and the whole system explained to them in a number of dispatches." Speaking of the acquisition of the land in Victoria district, the Doctor says: "Sir James Douglas made what he termed a treaty of amity and friendship with the Indians in order to put the earliest settlers on an amicable footing with the Indians. The 'buying out,' as Mr. Dun can terms it, consisted in giving the Indians a quantity of blankets and other *iktas*—they had no further claims. Although Sir James Douglas continued governor for many years after this transaction, he never repeated it—never gave any other tribe a potlatch on this account. The Indians were not averse to the settlement of white people among them, so potlatches, being unnecessary, were discouraged and not resorted to. This very case, then, goes to show that Sir James Douglas was of opinion that the Indians had not any legal rights—thus agreeing with the judges and jurists."

In reply to the above, permit me to call attention to the following from original documents, as showing the views and *true* Indian policy of the home government, Sir James Douglas, and the colonial house of assembly of Vancouver Island:

Governor Douglas to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Victoria, 25th March, 1861

My Lord Duke,—I have the honor of transmitting a petition from the house of assembly of Vancouver Island to your grace, praying for the aid of Her Majesty's government in extinguishing the Indian title to the public lands in this colony; and setting forth with much force and truth the evils that may arise from the neglect of that very necessary precaution. 2 As the native Indian population of Vancouver Island have distinct ideas of property in land, and mutually recognise their several exclusive and possessory rights in certain districts, they would not fail to regard the occupation of such portions of the colony as the white settlers, unless with the full consent of the proprietory tribes, as national wrongs; and the sense of injury might produce a feeling of irritation against the settlers, and perhaps disaffection to the government that would endanger the peace of the country. 3. Knowing their feelings on that subject, I have in practice up to the year 1859, to purchase the native rights in the land, in every case, prior to the settlement of any district; but since that time, in consequence of the termination of the Hudson's Bay company's charter, and the want of funds, it has not been in my power to continue it. Your grace must, indeed, be well aware that I have, since then, had the utmost difficulty in raising money enough to defray the most indispensable wants of the government. 4. All the settled districts of the colony, with the exception of Cowichan, Chemainus and Barclay Sound, have been already bought from the Indians at a cost in no case exceeding £2. 10s. sterling for each family. As the land has, since then, increased in value, the expense would be relatively somewhat greater now, but I think that their claims might be satisfied with a payment of £3 to each family; so that, taking the native population of those districts at 1,000 families, the sum of £3,000 would meet the whole charge. 5. It would be improper to conceal from your grace the importance of carrying that vital measure into effect without delay. I have, etc.,

James Douglas."

The Secretary of State for the Colonies to Governor Douglas, C. B.

Downing Street, 19th Oct., 1861.

"Sir:—I have had under my consideration your despatch No. 24, of the 25th of March last, transmitting an address from the house of assembly of Vancouver Island, in which they pray for the assistance of Her Majesty's government in extinguishing the Indian title to the public lands in the colony, and set forth the evils that may result from a neglect of this precaution. I am fully sensible of the great importance of purchasing without loss of time the native title to the soil of Vancouver Island; but the acquisition of the title is a purely colonial interest, and the legislature must not entertain any expectation that the British taxpayer will be burthened to supply the funds or British credit pledged for the purpose. I would earnestly recommend therefore to the house of assembly, that they should enable you to procure the requisite means, but if they should not think proper to do so, Her Majesty's government cannot undertake to supply the money requisite for an object which, whilst it is essential to the interests of the people of Vancouver Island, is at the same time purely colonial in its character, and trifling in the charge that it would entail. I have, etc.,

(Signed), Newcastle."

It should be here mentioned that in previous despatches, dated 31st July, 1858, and 11th April, 1859, respectively, the secretary of state for the colonies had written, "Let me not omit to observe, that it should be an invariable condition, in all bargains or treaties with the natives for the session of lands possessed by them, that subsistence should be supplied to them in some other shape." In the case of the Indians of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, Her Majesty's government earnestly wish that when the advancing requirements of colonization press upon lands occupied by members of that race, measures of liberality and justice may be adopted for compensating them for the surrender of the territory which they have been taught to regard as their own."

From these official documents the following conclusions will probably be reached by impartial readers:

1. The Indian policy of Sir James Douglas recognized in a most specific and distinct manner the proprietary title of the Indians to the lands in the different districts which they inhabited. This is still further apparent by the working of the documentary instruments by which that title was conveyed to Sir James Douglas as representative and agent of the H. B. Co., in respect to the lands from Sooke to Saanich (inclusive) and also Nanaimo and Fort Rupert. Copies of these documents, 13 in number, are now before me, and are denominated "Conveyance of land to Hudson's Bay company by Indian tribes." In the body of each document it is called a *deed*, and the transaction is called a *sale*. The price in pounds, shillings and pence is in each case stated and conditions carefully noted. Signatures of Indian chiefs and heads of families are affixed, as also those of witnesses, with date and place of execution.

2. That the government of her majesty enjoined such a policy and warmly approved Sir James Douglas' efforts to carry it out.

3. That the house of assembly for Vancouver island just as clearly recognized the Indian title, and the necessity for purchasing it before the settlement of the various districts by the whites, and asked for aid in continuing this policy.

4. That the reason why this humane, British and Christian policy was not continued was not that Sir James Douglas, or the local house, or the home government, had ascertained the policy to be unwise, or wrong, or that they had changed their minds in reference to its wisdom and justice; but simply and solely that a depleted colonial exchequer would not supply the requisite funds, and the home government were unwilling to use British funds for colonial purposes. From that date the "policy" of Sir James, endorsed by the local house, the home government, and later the Dominion government, has been held in abeyance. The evil effects of this condition of things has shown itself from year to year in dissatisfaction and difficulty among the Indians where the whites have settled, without the Indian title having first been dealt with. This appears from the official correspondence of government agents and surveyors, and is not confined to the northwest coast of the mainland, much less to Metlakahtla.

5. As the titles or claims in question do not cancel themselves by the lapse of years, it may be affirmed to day, in the language of Mr. Nind, (then government agent at Lytton), under date 17th July, 1865, "They (the Indians) are jealous of their possessory rights, and are not likely to permit settlers to challenge them with impunity; nor, such is their spirit and unanimity, would many settlers think it worth while to encounter their undisguised opposition. I believe the only method of settling this matter satisfactorily, and with equity to both Indians and whites, will be for the government to extinguish the Indian claims, paying them what is properfor so doing and giving them certain reservations for their sole use." It is to be hoped, in the interest of justice and British fair play, to say nothing of humanity and religion, that the government will take hold of this skeleton kept in the official cupboard for so many years, which "will not down" any longer, and deal with it in a fair, equitable and states manlike manner. And I may be permitted to suggest, as my humble opinion, that it can best be done by taking up the matter where it was left when the above quoted reply of the Duke of Newcastle to the address of the local house was received at Victoria. It will no doubt cost more to settle these claims by treaty now than it would have done then; but not so much as some people suppose, and besides it being right and in accordance with the golden rule, (which, it is to be feared, some who think more of the *gold* than of the *rule*, care little about), it is, after all the most economical way in which the matter will ever be settled. Enough has already been spent in utterly abortive efforts at settlement upon a *wrong basis* to have extinguished quite a number of these claims—and the end is not yet! When General Sherman was sent to settle the Cheyennes, he spent $15,000,000 (fifteen millions) in killing 30 Indians. A word to the wise is sufficient. E. Robson.

Nanaimo, Nov. 19th, 1886.

A Beautiful Memorial.

Mr. Henry C. Beeton, of Turner, Beeton & Co., has presented St. John's church with a beautiful and costly window in memory of his son Arthur C. Beeton, who lies buried in Ross bay cemetery. The window is placed in the centre space of the chancel wall, and is composed of two portions separated by a slight frame. It is a most beautiful specimen of stained glass work, and makes an adornment of appropriate character for the church. The subject of the picture is that of Christ blessing little children, and the scene is exquisitely portrayed. On the left hand portion is the figure of our Lord, seated, in the act of blessing a child, while others of the children are at his feet. On the right hand portion are the mothers and other children, in the rear being the apostles Peter and St. John. The expression of the faces and coloring of the figures and background of trees is simply lovely in effect and in general harmony, soft and pleasing. Underneath is the text "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Above the main picture are the figures of two angels with outspread wings, kneeling and holding scrolls on which are the words "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God"

At the foot of the window are the memorial words: "In loving memory of Arthur Channing Beeton, youngest son of Henry Coppinger and Louisa Beeton, of London, England; born Dec. 8, 1860; died Oct. 22, 1882, and interred in Ross bay cemetery."

St. John's church is to be congratulated on being the possessor of so handsome an adornment for their very cosy and pretty interior, and it is hoped that this will be but one of a number of similar gifts that will be added, and thus render the house of God beautiful and attractive. The window is from the establishment of Gibbs & Howard, Charlotte street, Fitzroy, London, and cost $750.

Our Mines.

Recent events have made it so thoroughly manifest that the British investor has a liking for gold mines that it is much to be regretted that energy is lacking in the development of the gold-bearing districts of British Columbia. Here is a vast and sparsely-populated region, rich in mineral resources; who will take it in hand? Mr. Koch, from whose report to the gold commissioner of the Cariboo district we recently quoted, points out that as yet there has been nothing like an adequate examination of the gold-quartz deposits in that part of her Majesty's dominions. He makes special reference to Hixon creek, where he superintended operations in the hope of finding a paychute of quartz. "A shaft was sunk, and at a depth of 60 feet a drift was started, and the vein was found at the exact point where it was estimated to be, and no vein in California has truer or better defined walls." Mr. Koch proceeds to admit that it is quite possible a greater depth must be reached before paying quartz in large quantities will be obtained, but he expresses himself satisfied with the results of recent prospecting, and declares his opinion that the gold quartz deposits of the district are not merely local, but that a regular and unbroken formation exists; that this continues for many miles, and that true fissure, and even contact, veins of gold and silver can be found by intelligent prospectors. If this belief be well founded most people will be of opinion that intelligent prospectors had better set to work at once—unless, indeed, they are afraid that the authorities of British Columbia, following the example of the Dogberries of Queensland, are only waiting until English capital has been invested in their mines to give the whole business a gratuitous but official black eye.—*London (Eng.) Financial News*

SUICIDE AT HOPE.

A Chinaman Hangs Himself with his Queue.

Last Sunday, about midday, an Indian rushed into Mr. Wardle's store breathless and scared saying, "memaloost kopa lope," which Mr. Wardle understood to signify that some man had hanged himself. A crowd of Indians gathered about, and with them Mr. Wardle went into the wood and found that a Chinaman was suspended from a tree, and on examination it was clear that the queue had done the business. The coroner at Yale was telegraphed to, and on Tuesday Mr. Wise came down and held an inquest, which terminated in a verdict that Chung had gone out of the world by the aid of his pigtail.

America's Thanksgiving.—To-day is one of the most generally observed holidays in the United States, it being the national thanksgiving day. What a consumption of turkey there will be from San Francisco to Portland, Maine,—what happy reunions and general content.

DOWN FROM THE ARCTIC.

San Francisco's Whale Trade Estimated at Half a Million Dollars.

The following article from the San Francisco Bulletin is deemed of such interest to our whaling population as to deserve publication:

Whalers are dropping into port one by one. The whaling season turns out to be better than the preceding one. At the last accounts the ships of the Pacific Whaling company had taken sixty-two whales, with a prospect that at least ten more would be taken. This company has five small steamships averaging about 250 tons burthen, or a little under that mark. There is the Belana, Orca, Narwhal, Thrasher and Grampus. There are also one or more sailing ships. Two or three of these vessels have already come into port. The average value of whales caught in the Arctic was set down a year ago at $5,000 each. The decrease in the price of whalebone has probably reduced that value somewhat. Estimating the average value at $4,000 for each, the sixty-two whales known to be caught by the Pacific Whaling company would be worth $248,000, or in round numbers, a quarter of a million. If ten more whales are added, which is a reasonable calculation, the gross value of the catch by this one company would be $288,000. That is not a bad season's work. It is comparatively a good one. It is true that steam whalers cost a great deal more than vessels fitted out only with sails. Three sailing ships fitted out as whalers can be sent to sea for the cost of a single steam whaler. But as far as hard work goes, only two sailing ships have had a full catch this year, while the catch of the Orca would be considered very good if divided among three sailing ships. The value of the latter, with outfit when ready to go to sea, is hardly more than $30,000. Many ships of this class are not valued higher than $8,000 to $10,000. The outfit nearly doubles the cost.

Besides the ships of the Pacific Whaling company the New Bedford company employs a fleet in the Arctic, but with less steamers and more sailing vessels. These have had the usual variety of luck—good, bad and indifferent. But from the data at hand it is judged they have done fairly well but with hardly so good a showing as the Pacific Whaling company. There are also a number of sailing ships which are owned outside of organized companies. The wealth brought down from the Arctic to San Francisco this year will be hardly less than half a million dollars according to the estimates on values on oil and bone at this port. It is probably somewhat greater because the ruling prices here are really not the prices which most of the whale shipowners obtain in other markets for oil and bone. It is quite certain that there is to be no decrease in Arctic whaling at this port. Considering that freights have been low and business dull, it appears that the whalers have done better for their owners than than the average of small vessels in other trades. The colliers and small lumber vessels have not done better. The half million of wealth brought down from the Arctic this season represents the gross earnings, the net profits being a great deal less. There is the interest on the value of the ships, the outfit, the wear and tear and the proportion of fairs to be divided among the crews. There is also a large outlay for insurance on vessels going to the Arctic, the largest insurance premiums being paid on these vessels.

For the last six weeks or so whales have been coming out of the Arctic ice, and have been making their way south. In the winter season there are no whales in the Arctic ocean, for the good reason that they cannot live there when the water is frozen over so that there is no breathing spaces A considerable number are supposed to die every year by being caught under ice so thick that when they come up to breathe they cannot break the ice. Frequently a dozen or more whales may be seen in small areas of open water surrounded by ice where no ship can go, or not without greater perils than ought to be encountered. Just where all the Arctic whales winter has long been a mooted question. They are found all along the coast of California during some of the winter months. But their breeding grounds are the lower latitudes, as at Magdalena Bay and in the shallow bays of the Lower Mexican coast. It is probable that some go down as far as the Central American coast. All the right whales seen along the coast do not enter the Arctic, although the great number do. Many are found in the summer season in the Okhotsk Sea and along the coast of Siberia. The right whale seeks out his summer feeding grounds in high latitudes. This annual migration and return is counted on with the greatest certainty. As many whales come out of the Arctic in autumn as in spring. These facts govern the operations of the whaling fleet. Hence, after the Arctic whaling season is over, many ships discharge and refit at once and go down the coast preparatory to a later cruise in the high latitudes. At several points along the coast, in this State, there are shore stations, where a considerable number of whales are caught as they go up and down the coast.

Long whaling voyages, such as were made twenty-five years ago, are seldom made now. Whale ships would leave, say the port of New Bedford, for the Pacific ocean and the South seas, and be absent two years, and sometimes longer. In that time they would fill up. Sailing ships frequently returned with from two to three thousand barrels of oil, one-third or more of which was sperm Bone did not figure so prominently in the returns as it does now. Of course the sperm whale has no bone, or none fit for commerce. The right whale has come to be more valuable than the sperm whale, on account of the bone and the low prices of sperm as well as right whale oil. In former times there were ships known as sperm whalers. They cruised within the limits of about 20 degrees of latitude on both sides of the equator. If the right whale was found in these warm latitudes in the winter season, he was, of course, taken in, but he did not count for as much in those times as the sperm whale. While more whalers approach the Arctic by way of Greenland every season, it does not appear that they have an average run of luck that is better than that of the whalers going to the Arctic from San Francisco. The low prices obtained for oil during many past years have abridged the profits of the whaling business. Nor does it seem probable that much better prices will be obtained in the near future on account of the use of coal oil for illuminating purposes. But as there never has been found a satisfactory substitute for whale bone, the price of that product will go far to make up for the diminished price of whale oil.

A SENSATION SPOILED.

The Alleged Elopement of a Temiscamingue Nun Proven Untrue.

The announcement is made in the Montreal Herald, that a young nun, whose religious name is Sister Lacombe, a short time ago fled from a community of sisters established at Temiscamingue with a young man named Lapierre, and married him.

A Free Press reporter, with a desire of ascertaining the veracity of the report, dropped down to the Basilica, and upon making enquiries found that the story of the elopement is not correct; but that the facts are, that the young man Lapierre, who owned property at Temiscamingue, fell in love with Sister Lacombe, whom he had known before she took the veil. He then made application to his Holiness the Pope for dispensation for Sister Lacombe from her oaths, which dispensation was granted. In consequence whereof Lapierre married the young lady. There was neither an elopement nor a sensation.—*Ottawa Free Press*

Vancouver Mayoralty.—Mr. Oppenheimer has requested the News to state that the rumor that he did not intend to present himself as a candidate for the mayoralty is premature. Mr. Oppenheimer also denies that he is supporting Mr. MacLean.

Late Canadian News.

ONTARIO.

The Department of Marine and Fisheries at Ottawa have received enquiries from Newfoundland and Labrador firms about the facilities the Pacific coast offers for fishing settlements, and stating that, if satisfactory, they would embark in the trade.

The corner stone of the old King's college building in Queen's park, Toronto, which was laid in 1841, was rolled over this afternoon by workmen who are tearing the building down to make room for the new Parliament buildings. A glass jar was found containing coins of the reign, chiefly of George III's time, besides newspapers, a new Testament, King's college calandar and a copy of the charter establishing the college. By a strange coincidence Col. R. B. Denison and ex-Ald. Tinning, who were present at the laying of the corner stone, were present when the jar was taken from the wall.

Charles Oavern, the Italian count, was committed for trial at Toronto on a charge of obtaining two diamond rings from L. G. Dubais, under false pretences. Evidence was given that he had received $70 on the account of one of the rings. He was admitted to bail.

The Toronto Ryerson memorial committee have awarded the work of the bronze statue to Hamilton McCarthy, sculptor, who has taken up his residence in Toronto. The statue will be nine feet high, with a granite pedestal, and will likely be placed at Queen's park.

James Beatty, M. P., is out with a long address to his constituents, which contains a long and sweeping denial of the boodling charge so freely made against him. He contends that the entire transaction regarding the Northwest Central was in the nature of an ordinary railway deal such as has often been made in Toronto and Ottawa.

The Toronto Mail's London special correspondent cables that he has been officially informed that the Colonial and Indian institute will not be opened until the necessary building is completed, which may take two or three years.

The young wife of Archie Pharel, street car driver, Toronto, has disappeared, and as two young men named James and Robert Craig, shipbuilders, who boarded in the same house, left at the time, it is thought the trio have made their way to the States. Before leaving Mrs. Pharel borrowed various sums of money from other boarders in the house.

D. R. Davis, of Cesto, Essex county, just called to the bar, is the only colored barrister in the province.

A man, whose name has not been learned, but who is said to have been in the employ of Messrs. Perley and Pattee, is reported to have been found dead, torn to pieces, and partly devoured by wolves in the vicinity of the Pettewawa river a few days ago.

About a year ago, the Brockville Recorder says, John Dunn, a sober, industrious moulder, employed in the Jas. Smart works, married Sarah Coleman, a Quebec girl, aged 19. Though the bride was not particularly strong, and was of a morose disposition, the couple are said to have lived happily together. Mr. Dunn remonstrated with his wife for having taxed her strength by carrying a couple of pails of water, and though she said little it was apparent that she took the scolding to heart. It was noticed that she was ill, being attacked with frequent fits of vomiting. Finally she became so bad as to arouse her husband's suspicion and when charged with taking something admitted that she had swallowed a large dose of Paris green. The unhappy sufferer retained consciousness until the last and calmly gave all the particulars regarding her wilful act.

Mr. Robert McGowan, a Garafraxa farmer, living near Masonville, was the victim of a fatal accident. He had been threshing during the day. After the work was over he went to the barn to replace the door. In doing so he lost his balance, and fell head first to the ground, a distance of some sixteen feet. He was picked up dead, his neck having been broken in the fall. He was about 50 years of age. This is the fourth death that has occurred in the family within the last two years.

The report of the Finance committee of the Sam Jones revival services, Toronto, which has just been issued shows total receipts $5,179.19; disbursements $4,343.95, balance $825.24, which has been distributed amongst charitable institutions in the city.

Fire burnt the residence of Rev. D. C. Johnson, Presbyterian minister, of Petrolia, recently; also the house adjoining. Loss, $8,050.

Mrs Annie Smith, of Hamilton, broke her neck a few days ago by falling down the cellar stairs.

The conservatives of East Lambton have nominated Geo. Mentorieff, of Petrolia, for the commons.

De Garmon, of Hamilton, who shot himself while in a typhoid fever delirium, is dead.

Mayor Howland has definitely decided to become a candidate for the local legislature for Toronto. He says he will be thoroughly independent of political parties, and will support any measure which will give legislative enforcement of the Scott act. His election is tolerably certain.

A voting contest between Sir John and Blake at St. Patrick's bazaar, Ottawa, was won by Sir John, with a majority of 3,700.

Rev. John Salmon, of Yorkhill Congregational church, has resigned, owing to trouble which has arisen out of a sermon preached by him recently, in which he emphasized a strong belief with a curse. His resignation has not yet been accepted.

The Globe announces that nomination and election days have been changed by order of the lieutenant-governor-in-council from the twenty-second and twenty-ninth of December respectively, to the twenty-first and twenty-eighth, as it is found that the annual school meetings take place throughout the rural districts on the 29th.

Rev. Mr. Lynch, a retired priest, residing near Cornwall, has taken action against the Witness for $15,000 damages for libel in publishing a paragraph casting a slur on his moral character.

Conservative and liberal associations in Ottawa are organizing for the campaign. The city is filled with politicians many of whom agree that parliament will meet early in February, and that the elections will be held in September.

Joseph Heckerdon, a respectable farmer living three miles west of Waterloo, has committed suicide by hanging. No cause can be given for his rash act.

The case of the St. Catharine's milling and lumber company and the province of Ontario, involving once more the boundary question, is being argued before the Supreme court. The suit was first taken against the company by the respondents to restrain them from lumbering in Lake Superior district on limits granted by the Dominion government. The respondents allege that the expenses of the case are being borne by the Ottawa authorities. Dalton McCarthy has commenced his argument on behalf of the company. Hon. David Mills appears for Ontario. The case will go to the Privy Council.

An attempt was made to burn the residence of Mr. James Wanless, the lately appointed Police magistrate for South Huron, who has had to fine some persons for violating the Scott act. Batting saturated with coal oil, was laid at the end of the building, and fired. The flames had gotten well under way when first noticed and were with difficulty extinguished.

A young Englishman named Stephens, who only arrived in Ottawa a short time since, made a desperate attempt to commit suicide. An inmate of his boarding house, happening to enter his room, was horrified to see him bending over a basin and cutting away at his throat with a razor. Stephens, being overpowered, was taken to the Protestant Hospital, where he now lies with two horrible gashes in his throat. He cannot recover. He was a taciturn, despondent fellow at all times.

NOVA SCOTIA

It is rumored that ex-Speaker McGillivray positively declines to sacrifice himself against Hon. Mr. Thompson in Antigonish. The Grits will probably run a dummy candidate.

John Grenier is negotiating with a New York company for the sale of valuable coal and copper properties owned by him in Cape Breton. Grenier sets a handsome price, $300,000, on the properties. The copper areas begin at George River mountain and extend westerly ten miles along the southern side of Little Bras d'Or, being divided into four blocks of five miles square. The coal areas cover fourteen square miles and are situated between Lingan and Sydney.

Valuable discoveries of gold are reported from Digby county causing great excitement there.

The Customs department instructed Collector Ross to investigate the circumstances of the seizure of the American vessel Flying Scud and the Nova Scotian Aurianch. Consul-General Phelan, after a thorough investigation into the facts, is convinced that no officers of the cruiser or Customs department had anything to do with laying a trap to get the Yankee skipper to violate the law so that they could divide the fine. The whole scheme was planned and carried out by an informer named John Frost. Captain Jordan agreed to take him to Gloucester, but subsequently changed his mind. Then Frost planned to get him to violate the law and make several hundred dollars for informing. The vessel was duly seized, but whether the informer ever gets anything is doubtful. Meanwhile he will be arrested for stealing Captain Jordan's overcoat. The Lunenburg schooner Aurianch was seized by Customs Detective Curless for alleged smuggling of liquor a year ago, when commanded by another captain and sailed by a different crew. It is further alleged that the informer was paid for making the information. The owner denied responsibility, refused to pay the fine and threw the vessel into the hands of the Halifax collector. He was instructed to use his judgment in the matter and allowed the vessel to proceed, and will investigate the facts at leisure.

It is said that Mr. Dodd will retire from the contest in Cape Breton county, and that Messrs