Weekly Colonist.

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 1885

POLITICS IN THE SCHOOLS.

Mr. Trustee Fell's speech at the meeting of the Victoria School Board on Tuesday night was an audacious attempt to introduce politics into the public schools and degrade the noble system of education which the present government are doing all in their power to foster and advance. Mr. Fell is old enough to know better than to make charges which every schoolboy can inform him are entirely groundless. What government ever did nearly as much as the present government for the advancement of free education? Every reasonable request of the various trustee boards has been granted. New school districts have been created and new schoolhouses erected in every part of the province, and the appropriations have been largely in excess of those of the preceding government. Yet Mr. Fell, with that hidebound dogmatism and in that cross-grained spirit which distinguish him from his fellow-man, affects to believe that the system is in danger from the encroachments of a government which is doing all in its power to preserve the institution in which the Mr. F. professes to take so lively an interest. Mr. Fell is opposed to the registration of voters. Why? Does he desire to see the legitimate vote of the city again smothered by an avalanche of votes cast by irresponsible persons who have no children to educate, and who are here to-day and away to-morrow? He is also opposed to the ballot. Why? Does he desire to sit at the polls to frighten voters who may be on the wrong side of his ledger into casting for him? If the ballot is only fit for "sneaks and hypocrites" is it not surprising that it is in vogue in every country where the people enjoy free government? The old system of open voting was discarded because it was found that landlords and tradesmen intimidated their tenants and debtors, and that there could not be had a fair test of popular feeling under such circumstances. What Mr. Fell said on Tuesday about registration went to show the wisdom of the adoption of the registration system. He complained that many illegal votes were cast last year, when there was no registration. The registration system has been adopted to cure the very evil of which he complained, and render illegal voting next to an impossibility. Lastly, it is found on enquiry that, in spite of his assertion, he experienced no difficulty in procuring registration papers, about 400 having been issued to him alone. Taken all in all, the speech of Mr. Fell did not differ materially from most of his oratorical efforts, which usually abound in absurd inconsistencies, unfounded charges and rude language.

AN ANOMALOUS PROCEEDING.

We published yesterday an account of the action of Mr. Todd, commissioner of police under the Dominion government, in fining Mr. George Murdoch for selling liquor at Eagle Pass Landing within the railway belt, and confiscating a quantity of his liquor besides. Mr. Murdoch had granted to him and holds a retail license duly issued by the licensing magistrate for the district, authorizing him to carry on the occupation of a retail liquor vendor at Eagle Pass Landing. The Dominion government have proclaimed the locality as being governed by the Public Works Act of Canada which purports to prohibit in certain places the sale of intoxicating liquors. The province contends that this prohibition is *ultra vires* the Dominion parliament on the ground that the province is exclusively entitled to pass laws upon the subject, and is, moreover, entitled to derive a revenue from liquor licenses which the Dominion would interdict. In fact, the very same points arise upon the question as upon the Dominion License Act which has been recently declared *ultra vires* by the supreme court of Canada. Now, the anomalous part of the Murdoch proceeding is this: Mr. Todd, while filling the office under the Dominion government of commissioner of police, also holds a commission from the province as a stipendiary magistrate. The province is determined to assert its constitutional right upon this license question, and has, so far, been successful. Local stipendiary magistrates will obey the provincial law; but Mr. Todd, under his Dominion appointment, considers himself bound to obey the Dominion law which the province impeaches. No man can serve two masters in this way. As a Dominion official, Mr. Todd is expected by his employers to obey their statute and not to question its authority; while on the other hand, as a provincial officer he is required to uphold the laws and rights of the province, duties which are directly in conflict with one another. We understand that the Murdoch case is to be appealed, and thus it is probable that the question of the constitutionality of the Dominion statute will be tested. Meanwhile, the interests of the province in its struggle to preserve its constitutional rights demand the cancellation of Mr. Todd's commission as a stipendiary magistrate, a step which, we hope, will be instantly taken.

BRITAIN'S WEAK SPOT ON THE PACIFIC.

An able paper from Mr. Baillie-Grohman appeared in a late number of the Pall Mall Gazette and is reproduced in this journal to-day. Mr. Grohman goes minutely into the whole question of defence and demonstrates in clear and unmistakable language the value of Victoria and Esquimalt for the preservation of British interests on the Pacific. The same facts have been often spread in British Columbia journals. Mr. Grohman's idea is not a new one; but through his instrumentality it reaches the eye of the British public through a widely read London journal. We are glad that the writer has ably supplemented the exertions of the British Columbia press in this particular and feel that his words will not fall on unheeding ears. Our young friend of the Times in referring to Mr. Grohman's paper cannot allow the opportunity to slip of dragging Burrard Inlet forward as a place of vast strategical importance, when, in point of fact, the security of the Inlet depends entirely on the ability of Victoria and Esquimalt to successfully resist the shock of a hostile attack. If the island were to pass into foreign hands Burrard Inlet might be gobbled up at the enemy's leisure. Hence, while it is of vital importance to render Victoria and Esquimalt impregnable the defence of the Inlet is a matter of secondary consideration—so small, indeed, that Mr. Grohman fails to refer to that locality as possessing any strategic value whatever. The key to the province is here. This is the natural and inevitable terminus of the transcontinental railway and the place which, above all others must be well protected if there is to be a foreign war.

RAILWAY CHARGES.

Yesterday, while trying to "help a lame dog over a stile" we got bitten for our good intentions. The Times brought a damaging accusation against Mr. Onderdonk, which was neither more nor less than an arraignment of that gentleman at the bar of public opinion for alleged fraud. Referring to the accusation we suggested that Mr. Onderdonk owed it to himself to disprove it, for if it was true he had laid himself open to criminal prosecution; and if it was untrue that he would probably institute proceedings for libel against his assailant. There was no desire expressed to have the Times made a defendant in a libel suit. The Times, however, affects to think differently, flies into a rage and declines to be helped over the stile by us. He flatters himself if he imagines that his enterprise engrosses our thoughts, or that we wish to see him in the prisoner's dock. On the contrary, nothing would afford us greater pain; but we must repeat that either the Times is right or wrong. If it is right, Mr. Onderdonk should be prosecuted; if it is wrong, the Times should be forced to apologize or accept the alternative of a prosecution. As for Mr. Onderdonk being the "master" of *The Colonist*, the idea is original with the Times. The only "master" *The Colonist* has is that of the publisher, whose name appears at the head of the columns. He is not indebted to Mr. Onderdonk to the extent of a shilling, and is under no obligations to him or any of his staff. All he desires is to see the Times' allegations sustained or disproved, and if the Times should be made the victim of a libel suit we shall be sorry, although its punishment might be just.

AN INJUDICIOUS ORDER IN COUNCIL—THE PRICE OF LAND TO BE RAISED AND THE LUMBER BUSINESS CRUSHED.

We have read with a considerable amount of regret and disappointment the order in council of the 20th April last, embodying regulations for the disposal of Dominion lands within the railway belt in the province of British Columbia. When the Settlement Act was passed it was expressly provided that *bona fide* settlers who had made substantial improvements on any of the lands within the railway belt should get their lands at such prices as should be charged to settlers generally. It was, however, arranged with Sir Alexander Campbell, and subsequently confirmed by the privy council, that the price at which lands should be sold to actual settlers should be one dollar per acre. This was a solemn agreement made with the provincial government in writing. It was announced by Sir Chas. Tupper in the commons and by Sir Alexander Campbell in the senate, and can be read in Hansard, that the price to settlers would be $1 per acre. The Dominion government agent, in this city, acting under instructions from Ottawa, announced by notice in the newspapers and by circular, in answer to applicants for land, that the price would be $1 per acre. Now, when we read the laboriously worked-out order in council, it is painfully manifest to us that the promises made have been forgotten, that the interests of an important class of the community who have been attracted to the province and induced to settle and make extensive improvements upon railway lands on the faith of the Dominion government's pledges, have been overlooked or wantonly sacrificed. Clauses 13 to 24, headed "homestead rights," appear to have been intended to apply to the settlers already located upon railway lands, and we note that "government price," and "such price as may be fixed by the governor in council," are substituted for the $1 per acre of the agreement. Sub-section 3 of Clause 13 provides that homestead entry shall only apply to surveyed agricultural land. Now, as the greater portion of the land settled upon is unsurveyed, under the clause just quoted a settler in unsurveyed districts would be ruled out. Section 14, however, would seem to meet the requirements of the case by providing that whenever the survey of any township has been made, the *bona fide* settler who shall have made improvements before the survey shall have a prior right to obtain homestead entry to the land settled upon for the space of three months. This again is followed by Clause 15, which, after providing for a person locating upon unsurveyed land, winds up by saying that such location shall give to no person any rights whatever against the Crown. This appears to us to be not only unjust to the settlers on its merits but in contravention of the agreement embodied in the Settlement Act. It is certainly a cool proposition, to say the least, to tell a man that he shall have permission to stake off and occupy and improve to any extent a piece of land, but that after having done so he shall be deemed to have no rights whatever to the land so occupied and improved. Clause 24 and sub-sections, referring as they do exclusively to Manitoba and the Northwest territories, are without meaning, and are absurdly out of place. Clause 27 interpreted literally would stir up a hornet's nest about the ears of the minister of the interior if he attempted to enforce its provisions among the crown grantees of land within the railway belt. Every person who has acquired land in the province since 1858 has been held to be the owner of all minerals other than gold and silver which might be on, in or under the land conveyed to him by crown grant! Clause 27, however, coolly says that all such, whose lands are within the limits of the forty mile belt, shall have no right to any minerals whether base or otherwise, for none have been expressly conveyed. Clauses 28 to 38, referring to water privileges, are taken from the provincial land act without change save such as are necessary to put Dominion officers in place of provincial. Clauses 39 to 65 are mostly taken from the provincial timber act; but the changes which have been made both as to the regulations and the scale of fees are so onerous that they will work a complete wreck of the industry in the province within the limits of the railway belt. In the provincial act the price of a license is $10 per annum. The Dominion regulations fix the price for the same at $50 per annum. For every tree cut by the licensee the provincial act requires the payment of 15 cents; the Dominion government requires 30 cents for each tree. The provincial government charges 20 cents per thousand feet board measure of lumber cut. The Dominion government charge 75 cents per thousand. This amount, too, has to be paid before the logs leave the ground where they are cut, an officer requiring to be present at every camp to scale and collect. If a boom of logs should be caught in a gale of wind en route to the mill, after having been scaled and paid for at the high figure provided, that would be the misfortune of the lumber man; the Dominion revenue receipts would not be affected thereby. When it is remembered that the provincial government and legislature, anxious as they are to make as much revenue out of the timber wealth of the country, and conversant as they are with the local timber trade, have been unable to attempt to collect fees under the local act of more than about a third or a fourth of what is proposed under the Dominion regulations, it may be safely inferred that it was felt that to do so would be to paralyze the lumber trade of the country. If that be the case, and we believe it to be literally so, then to treble or quadruple the provincial rates as the Dominion government does, must mean that the trade in future is to have no existence on the Dominion lands of the province. This is a most serious outlook; one which should require the government and people of this country to enter a united protest. What are our members at Ottawa doing that they are not making the walls of parliament ring with their remonstrances against the unjust, the crippling, crushing regulations, which the federal government are putting in operation in regard to the British Columbia lands generally, which have passed into their hands, but particularly in regard to the timber lands? Where is Mr. Homer whose constituents are more particularly affected by this question at this crisis? Let him insist upon the lands within the belt being sold according to agreement to actual settlers at $1 per acre so that the hundreds of families of immigrants who have been induced by fair promises to settle and make extensive improvements on these lands shall be allowed in every instance to reap the fruit of their labor, and secure their homesteads on the same terms and conditions as settlers in other portions of the province can obtain it under provincial law. Let him insist also upon the timber regulations being modified so as to allow the trade to be carried on, and let the other members from this province also do their duty and unitedly demand that the interests of their province shall not be sacrificed either through the ignorance of the exceptional condition of things in this country as compared with the eastern provinces on the part of ministers, or whatever the reason may be, which causes the constant mistakes in the administration of Dominion affairs here on the part of the heads of departments at Ottawa.

THE "ANOMALOUS PROCEEDINGS" AT EAGLE PASS.

We give place in this issue to a communication from Mr. G. B. Wright, in which the writer combats our contention that the public interest demands the immediate cancellation of Mr. Todd's commission as a stipendiary magistrate for the province. Mr. Wright's objections to our views answer themselves. He asks "Would you have had Mr. Todd, acting as a stipendiary magistrate, establish himself as a judge of the constitutionality of the act and pronounce it "*ultra vires*?" "If so," Mr. Wright exclaims, "you might as well claim that British Columbia enactments supersede the common law of England." Pausing to remark that within constitutional limits British Columbia enactments may and frequently do supersede the common law of England, and that Mr. Wright's line of argument would reduce the right of provincial legislation to a cipher, will agree with him that it is not within Mr. Todd's province as a stipendiary magistrate to decide whether the Dominion act, which the province impeaches, be *ultra vires* or not. But the admission which we concede Mr. Wright proves the very point for which we are contending. Our provincial law says to Mr. Murdoch: "In consideration of so much money which you pay us, here is a license under which you may carry on the business of a retail liquor vendor at Eagle Pass landing." The Dominion statute says, "Notwithstanding that the provincial authority has granted you this license, received your money and says you may carry on business; we say you shall not do so." The paramount law of the British North America Act says that the province shall have the right to raise a revenue by the issue of licenses. Hence arises the conflict. Mr. Todd, holding commissions from both lawmakers, finds himself incompetent to decide which law is right. Hence, of his own mere motion, he has to prefer which master he would rather obey—the Dominion, which pays him a handsome and permanent salary, or the province, which yields him but a small return. Of course the solution is obvious. The province and her constitutional contentions must go to the wall. If it were the case of a judge who could—to use Mr. Wright's words—"establish himself as judge of the constitutionality of the act," the case would be widely different for he would then decide, according to law, whether the Dominion or provincial law should govern. But when you have an officer unlearned in the law, who cannot question the constitutionality of any statute he reads, we can only say, as was said some nineteen hundred years ago, "No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other or else he will hold to the one and despise the other." And so it is here. Mr. Todd, without being able to "establish himself a judge" of whether the Dominion or provincial law was the correct authority, has chosen to hold to the former and desert the latter. Hence it is we say, improper in the interest of the province that he should longer serve it. As to the numerous cases to which Mr. Wright refers of convictions along the line of the railway, they have been those of illicit selling without any license at all; but we venture to assert (and Mr. Wright will correct us if we are in error) that Mr. Murdoch's case is the first instance in which any one holding a provincial license within the railway belt, (and there are numbers who do), has been fined or interfered with. Why Mr. Murdoch should have been singled out for punishment remains yet to be explained.

Mr. Todd's Proposed Removal.

To the Editor:—It seems to me that the action of the local government asked for in an article in *The Colonist* is "an anomalous proceeding." I am unable to discuss the question on its legal points, not being a lawyer, but in the light of common sense it looks strange that a magistrate should be removed from office because he has simply carried out a law. The Public Works Act of Canada prohibits the selling of liquors by retail within any proclaimed district twenty miles alongside any public works. I do not understand that the constitutionality of this Act has ever been brought into question. For more than a year it has been known to be in force in this province, and in numerous cases during the past six months persons have been fined and convicted under its provisions along the line of the railway. How, then, could Mr. Todd, acting as a Stipendiary Magistrate, do other than he did? Would you have had him establish himself as judge of the constitutionality of the Act and pronounce it *ultra vires* of the Dominion parliament? Or was he to consider that his duty was simply to carry out the provincial laws and entirely to ignore the Canadian Statutes? I should think you might as well claim that British Columbia enactments supersede the common law of England.

I sincerely hope that the government will not follow your suggestion and remove Mr. Todd. I can bear witness to his faithful services as a preserver of the peace. His few journeys to the Eagle Pass and Columbia river districts, were made in the dead of winter, over rough roads, when travelling was dangerous and almost impossible. For months he was the only representative of law and order in a very large and densely populated district, in which crimes had been almost daily committed without an effort to restrain them. People there lived in daily fear of violence. The liquor traffic was almost entirely unrestrained. Murder and attempted murders and robberies was of frequent occurrence. Mr. Todd's appearance was always sufficient to check them during the time of his stay and was looked upon by the residents of that section as their only safeguard from lawlessness.

I should certainly hope that steps would be taken to decide the constitutionality of the law, under which Mr. Todd acted, before his removal for so acting was decided upon; and I trust, Mr. Editor, that you will reconsider your editorial.

G. B. Wright.

Victoria, May 14, 1885.

An Explanation Needed.

To the Editor:—It cannot be generally known that a system of unfair dealing is practiced in this city by which men seeking employment are duped.

Certain persons acting as agents of Bell, Larkin & Paterson induce men by their representations to purchase tickets at one or two dollars apiece, purporting to provide work for bearer on arrival at destination. The poor fellows in all confidence proceed to take advantage of the opportunity offered, pay their passage to Chemainus, walk many weary miles laden with their blankets, &c., to the supposed scene of labor, and on arrival in camp find there is no work to be had of the description promised on the ticket.

The inference to be drawn seems conclusive, either the agents are misinformed or there is some gross deception practiced on these men.

A Friend of the Workingman.

A Thin-Skinned Witness.

Victoria, 14th May, 1885.

Mr. Editor:—I see by to-day's issue a report of the Greer trial at the police court which would lead anyone, not well acquainted with all the facts, to infer that I was the person charged with forgery. I am told upon good authority that from the ambiguous wording of your former reports many persons are under the impression that I am the person charged. I must ask you to correct your report of yesterday's proceedings and to be more careful in the future.

John M. Spinks.

[If our correspondent will read the paragraph again he will probably discover that he has not the slightest reason to complain. No inference such as he states can be drawn from the report in yesterday's *Colonist* or from former reports, by any unprejudiced person—Editor.]

Is a Roomer a Householder.

To the Editor:—I am the occupant of a room with a private family. Shall I be entitled to vote at the approaching election for school trustees, because I occupy a room?

Querist.

[A "householder" means the master or chief of a house; one who keeps house with his family. It means something more than the mere occupant of a room. The occupant of a room is a *lodger*, not a householder. "Querist" is not, in our opinion, entitled to a vote.—Editor.]

"SCUPPERED" BY HADENDOWAS.

Perils of the Night in the British Camp at Suakim.

(London Daily Telegraph.)

"Scuppered" is a word which I never met with till I came to Suakim, and its horrible significance is a new experience to British troops. To be "scuppered" means here being hacked to pieces in your tent while asleep. How the Hadendowas (Arabs) do it nobody but themselves can tell, but night after night they come into the middle of our camp, stab and hack a few soldiers, and go out again scathless.

Crawling along on all fours, they travered the space between them and their victims with all the patient caution of wild beasts stalking prey. They reached the doomed tent. For the sake of the seabreeze the doorway is open, and the next instant the murderer is standing by the sleeping soldier's side. He feels a hand passing over his body and starts. A cry is rising to his lips. It is strangled in his throat by a groan of pain, and before the gallant fellow can even warn his comrades

THE FIERCE SPEAR IS DRIVEN HOME

through his body, the heavy two-handed sword has fallen across him. But the tent is alarmed. There is no time to be lost! Slashing this way and that, the murderers stab and hack with the fury of fiends, and then as the camp starts to its feet in clamour they are off. Not a sound betrays their passing. There is no trace of blood to tell of retribution.

They are gone—back to the villainous gullies, back into the scattered brush; and next we can imagine them sitting to refresh themselves outside our line of redoubts—to listen gleefully to the storm they have raised—the bugles telling the tale of murder completed and the murderers gone, the aimless volleys of rifles, the din of voices, the impotent utterances of our indignant guns roaring out an impossible vengeance.

"MURDER!" "MURDER!"

I heard the word ring out last night from the Ordnance camp, and then came a cry—the bitter cry of a man suddenly overtaken by the agony of death. A shot, and then another and another. Then a confusion of muffled sounds. Then silence. I was only 400 yards away. The night had been so still that the water lapping on the quay was plainly audible where I lay. Presently came this brief uproar of alarm, subsiding as it had risen. Signals were flashing overhead.

A party of Hadendowas had either crept straight across the camp, or, passing along the rear, had traversed its complete length, crossing twice in their way the electric light thrown by the Dolphin; had reached, without being observed, the furthest batch of tents from the starting-point, the nearest to the town. Behind them, only a hundred yards off, was Quarantine Island with its camp; nearer still lay our shipping, with the gunboats close in shore, commanding one line of their retreat, the whole of the British troops intercepting the other. Behind them was the sea, on their left the town; yet,

SUCH IS THE CONFIDENCE INSPIRED,

by nightly success and impunity that the assassins did not hesitate to creep even into such a desperate position as this. And their work was desperate and terribly complete.

Of the whole of the occupents of the tents—twenty-four in all—only two escaped their spears and swords, while the murderers retreated apparently unharmed. As they went back rifles were wildly emptied after them, and the Carys-fort fired volleys into the dark. But there was no trace of blood. Inside the tents the sight was dreadful—blood everywhere, and men lying about in all directions wounded and groaning.

IRATE MORMONS.

They Arm Themselves to Defend Polygamy.

Salt Lake, May 11.—A letter dated the 10th was received to-night from Oxford, Idaho. It says: "The greatest excitement prevails at Bear Lake. On the 5th warrants were placed in the hands of three deputy marshals for the arrest of eight polygamists at and around Paris. Nothing was heard from the matter here until this morning, when telegrams were received announcing the fact that the polygamists were all corralled in the meeting house at Paris under protection of an armed guard of brethren on the outside. The deputy marshals who attempted to make the arrest were marched out of Paris by an armed mob, who threatened that they will kill any one who attempts to serve the warrants. Marshal Fred Dubois, upon receipt of this news immediately telegraphed Superintendent Blickensdorfer, at Pocatello, and chartered a special train to convey himself and posse to Montpelier, from which point they will reach Paris about 5 p. m. to-day (Sunday.) Marshal Dubois' reputation for courage and discretion is all the guaranty that the people of Idaho need that resistance on the part of the Mormons will result in credit to the United States and disgrace to the misguided law defiers in the church,"

A three days' conference was being held at Paris, ending to-day.

THE BONANZA FIRM.

Fair's Retirement and Flood's Sale to Mackay.

Close upon the heels of the announcement of the retirement of Senator Fair from Nevada Bank came the rumor yesterday to the effect that James C. Flood had also sold out his interest in the bank to John W. Mackay. Mr. Mackay left on Friday last for Virginia, Nev., and Steamboat Springs, and could not therefore be seen to obtain the verification or contradiction of the reports. A Chronicle reporter called on Senator Fair last evening, thinking that he would probably know something of the matter, but that gentleman said:

"I must decline to say anything on the subject. I never allow myself to say anything about other people's affairs."

George L. Brauder, the Vice-President of the bank, on being spoken to on the subject, said that there was nothing new in the matter. Mr. Mackay had bought out the interests of both Mr. Flood and Mr. Fair last November.

Subsequently a Chronicle reporter saw a gentleman whose intimate association with both Mr. Mackay and Mr. Flood places him in a position to know the true inwardness of the affair. He said:

"It is true that Flood sold out to Mackay last November, but within the last few days Mr. Flood has again resumed his interest in the ownership of the bank. The fact of the matter is that in the summer of last year, differences arose between Flood and Mackay on the one hand and Fair on the other. Flood and Mackay both determined they would have no further business relations with Fair, and they went so far as to say that rather than continue business with him, they, owning two-thirds of the stock would disincorporate the bank and wind up the business. They offered either to sell out to Fair, or buy his interest. Senator Fair chose to buy out Flood and Mackay but backed out when the transaction came to be closed. Fair then said that he would accept the other proposition and sell out, but insisted as a condition that Flood should also retire and Mackay buy out the interest of both."

The reporter's informmr here remarked parenthetically: "Fair was under the impression that Mackay had lost heavily in his Atlantic cable enterprise and would not be able to accept these terms."

Continuing, he said: "Flood cabled immediately to Mackay, who had meanwhile gone to Europe, and Mackay jumped right on him at his word. That was last November. From that time until a few days ago Mackay was the the sole owner of the bank, although Flood still retained his position as President. During all that time, however, the relations between Flood and Mackay remained perfectly harmonious, as they always have been and a few days ago Flood bought back his interest. In fact, I don't believe that his stock was ever actually transferred. You will notice that the deed of the bank building and other property from the bank to Flood and Mackay recorded the other day conveyed an undivided half-interest to each. That fact shows that so far as they are concerned there is no division of interest. That conveyance was simply the result of their desire to place the bank upon a strict business basis as a banking corporation pure and simple. Some of the real property was bought in by them on foreclosures of their mortgages and they did not consider that holding real estate was a necessary part of a banking business, so they conveyed it to themselves individually."—S. F. Chronicle, May the 3rd.

AUSTRALIA AND GERMANY.

The Australian readiness to help the mother country is all the more noteworthy because it is displayed at a time when, says a London Times correspondent, we were more angry with the mother country than I ever remember to have been the case. The annoyance over the New Guinea business was intense, and we bitterly feel that we could only have made Lord Derby see in time what he has seen too late, the mischief would have been prevented. It is an irritating position for colonists to be placed in, not to be allowed to help themselves, and to have a colonial minister who will not do the right thing at the right time. We are not without hope that the inquisition into the German land claims (Fiji may prove a little bright) and what land purchases from the natives mean. Nobody is better informed on the matter than Mr. Thurston, and if he is only at liberty to say all he knows, Germans as well as Englishmen may learn something. We do not complain that Australians are not allowed to make sham purchases from ignorant natives who pretend to sell what is not their own. What we do complain of is that the Germans are allowed to do it, and that the Imperial flag instantly covers these scandalous traditions. The missionaries, who know the habits of the people, say distinctly that the petty chiefs who are treated with have no power whatever to sell their own tribal land, much less that of their neighbors. The little steamship Samoa, which left Sydney with Dr. Finch, had on board £22,000 worth of "trade," and what an estate that has nominally purchased. Baron Macleay, who is now in Sydney, tells me that on the part of the north Guinea coast where he resided he had intercourse with 150 different villages, all distinct in their autonomy, and had to study seven different languages to talk with them. The chief of one tribe has no more right to sell the land of another than the mayor of Amsterdam has to sell Antwerp to the French, and yet hundreds of miles of coast are nominally bought at one transaction for some rum, some muskets, some hatchets, some beads and some cloth, and the imperial corvette stands by to declare these purchases good and put them under imperial protection. And, after all, when this protectorate is established, it is only a question of protection to German interests. It does not protect the natives, it does protect other Europeans. It does not provide any kind of jurisdiction or government, it merely bars the way to any other government being established. There is not in Australia the smallest jealousy of German traders, and there has always been the best of feeling toward German settlers and residents, but there is a very strong objection indeed to their method of quasi-colonization, which is neither the one thing nor the other. If they want any territory let them annex it boldly, and establish, if not an avowed sovereignity, at least a protectorate which shall be genuine.

Supreme Court.

Before M. B. Begbie, C. J., and a Special Jury.)

Fan vs. Fan—In this cause the case for the plaintiff terminated last night, being the 3rd day of trial.

Mr. Bole opened the case for the defence commenting strongly on the discrepancies in the evidence adduced by the plaintiff and stated that the case for the defence was that the deed of 5th Sept., 1886, relied upon by the plaintiff was forged, in support of which view the learned counsel said he would produce evidence to show that at the date the deed was executed Chuck Fan was in Cariboo and Chu Fan in San Francisco; that the deed was executed by one Ho Wing who signed both names at Loo Chu Sing's request who was afterwards bought out of the firm for $17,200, a price four times as much as Lee Chang got for a similar share. The learned counsel also stated he would prove plaintiff had tried to bribe witnesses to testify in his behalf. At the conclusion of the opening address.

The court adjourned till to-day at 10 o'clock, a.m.

Nine of the Child Kidnappers and Murderers Caught.

Tucson, May 9.—Referring to the account published a few days since of the kidnapping and murder of a boy in the town of Tarlton, Mexico, your correspondent is informed that nine of the murderers have been caught. The enraged citizens of the town attempted to burn the brutes alive, but were held in check by the soldiery. All the prisoners have confessed save one. They state that the child was decoyed from his home, and when ransom was not forthcoming he was tortured, hanged to a tree, and his mutilated corpse thrown in front of his father's house.

OUR OTTAWA LETTER.

The National Highway—C. P. R. Charges in British Columbia The License Act.

(From our Special Correspondent.)

Ottawa, May 5th.

OUR NATIONAL HIGHWAY.

The gratifying announcement is made that all the gaps in the line of the C. P. R. between Ottawa and Winnipeg will be closed on Monday next. Mr. Van Horne yesterday cabled Sir Charles Tupper that by the middle of this month Imperial troops can be carried on British territory from Halifax to Vancouver in eleven days. If the house continues to sit for the next four weeks, as there seems every probability, the representatives of your province expect to return home over our Canadian road with probably a short portage of eighty miles.

THE LICENSE ACT.

The premier has given notice of amendments to the bill suspending the operation of those sections of the Dominion liquor license act declared *ultra vires* by the supreme court, providing that the governor-in-council may give effect to any provision of the act held to be valid by the privy council, and also that during the continuance of the suspension of the provisions now in abeyance, the appointment of license commissioners under the act are cancelled, with the exception of one commissioner in each license district, who shall be designated by the governor-in-council, and have all the powers and discharge all the duties conferred upon a board of license commissioners by the Dominion act. Applications for license under such provisions of the act as have not been suspended in consequence of the decision of the supreme court may be filed with the chief inspector until July next.

SIGHING FOR SUMMER.

"Winter still lingers in the lap of spring." On Tuesday a heavy snowstorm passed over eastern Ontario. While the "beautiful" was falling outside the parliament buildings a group of members were standing looking at a number of maple leaves hanging in the lobby. These had been sent from British Columbia to one of your members. They were picked on the 11th of April, and one of them when measured turned out to be ten inches across and eight from the point of the leaf to its junction with the stalk. A member present maintained that Ontario could do as well, and asked if there were not some maple trees near the buildings. He was answered in the affirmative, and was about to start to obtain proof of his contention when the laughter of those around him acted as a reminder that not a vestige of green was to be seen on the trees round Ottawa and that it would be wiser on his part to wait until summer.

BRITISH COLUMBIA RETURNS.

Mr. Baker was successful early in the week in getting a number of motions for returns affecting your province adopted. They include returns for copies of correspondence between the superintendent general of Indian affairs and the agent of the department in British Columbia upon the subject of establishing Indian schools in your province; for correspondence regarding the purchase of Indian reserve lands in B. C. the amount of postal revenue at Victoria, B C., from all sources from July 1st, 1884 to 28th February, 1885; and for a return of all officers of the civil service in B. C., giving rank, pay, allowances, dates of appointment and promotion, etc.

C. P. R. RELIEF.

After weeks of weary negotiating the government and the C. P. R. seem to have come to some decision with regard to the relief which is to be afforded to the latter. At a Conservative caucus held on Thursday morning the proposal of the government was submitted and it met with considerable approval from the large number of members present. Briefly the proposition is that the company shall issue bonds of the face value of $35,000,000. At the present time it will be received that the company stands indebted to the country to the extent of $30,000,000 for which the government holds a lien upon the road and all its belongings. The government will take $25,000,000 of the bonds about to be issued as security for $20,000,000 of last year's advance, the lien on all the lands remaining to the company from the original land subsidy for the remaining $10,000,000 of that loan. The government will then make a temporary advance to the company of $5,000,000 to enable it to meet its pressing needs, taking as security $8,000,000 worth of the issue of $35,000,000, the remaining two millions along with the eight millions to be held by the government and paid over to the company from time to time as the necessities of the road may demand. In this way the road will be released from the lien which now covers it, and the company will at once be able, its hands being untied, to realize a fair price for the new bonds, and to provide ample resources for operating the existing line in the most efficient manner. The scheme differs materially from those previously published, and it appears, after all, that a cash advance will be made. I understand that the government all along have resolutely set themselves against another money grant, and only yielded when it was represented to them that failing to obtain ready cash the company would have to suspend construction. Now that Canada has placed her hand to the plough, there is no turning back, and the proposition submitted to parliament appears to be the only satisfactory means of ensuring the early opening of a route which in the light of recent events is seen to be essential to the very existence of the Dominion.

C. P. R. RATES.

A question was submitted to the minister of railways yesterday by Mr. Reid, the member for Cariboo, with respect to the excessive freight charges exacted on that portion of the Canadian Pacific between Port Moody and Savona's Ferry. Mr. Pope in reply said that some complaints had been received by the government with respect to excessive charges, but not being in possession of the line yet, the contract time not expiring till July, nothing could be done. When the line was handed over, the government would see that the charges were not excessive.

Syrup of Figs.

Nature's own true Laxative. Pleasant to the palate, acceptable to the stomach, harmless in its nature, painless in its action. Cures habitual Constipation, Biliousness, Indigestion and kindred ills. Cleanses the system, purifies the blood, regulates the Liver and acts on the Bowels. Breaks up Colds, Chills and Fevers, etc. Strengthens the organs on which it acts. Better than bitter, nauseous Liver medicines, pills saults and draughts. Sample bottles free, and large bottles for sale by Langley & Co., Wholesale Agents. w

J. B. Ferguson & Co.

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL STATIONERS AND BOOK-SELLERS, VICTORIA, B. C.,

Is the best place in Victoria to obtain:—
School and College Text Books,
Account Books and Memorandums,
Fine and Business Stationery,
The Newest Books,
Wrapping Paper and Paper Bags,
Bibles, Prayer and Hymn Books,
All kinds of Office Supplies,
Artists' Drawing Papers, etc.,
Or anything usually kept by a first-class Stationery House. w

A Beatiful Expression.

(Brooklyn Union.)

It was getting late.

"Mr. Featherly," she said, hiding a yawn, "how beautiful is the Poet Tennyson's expression, "Men are God's trees."

"Ya-as," said Featherly, who had never heard it before, "very beautiful indeed."

"And in the glad spring time how beautiful the trees are when they begin to leave."

"Ya-as," repeated Featherly, "very beautiful indeed," and presently one of God's evergreens left.

BRITAIN'S WEAK POINT IN THE PACIFIC.

The Strategical Importance of Victoria and Esquimalt

To the British Empire.

(By W. A. Baillie-Grohman.)

To few, if indeed to any portion of our colonial empire, would hostilities with Russia threaten such perilous consequences as to Vancouver Island, for obvious reasons the key to our naval supremacy in the Pacific Ocean, so far as the latter comes within the limits of the least protected, most extensive, and by no means least exposed of our nine naval stations. The facts are simple and few, but of startling import, unrelieved, as it would seem to the writer, who has visited that somewhat undeservedly neglected corner of the British possession on four occasions, by a single reassuring feature, if the negatively favorable one that Alaska is no longer Russian be excepted. Of the three towns on the densely timbered, deeply indentured Vancouver Island (three hundred miles long and forty miles wide), the largest is Victoria, the capital of British Columbia. Both it and Esquimalt, the next in importance if not in size, lie on inlets on the south-western extremity of the island, only separated from each other by a promontory two or three miles wide. While the harbor of Victoria is small and only available to coasting craft, the bay on which Esquimalt lies is

ONE OF THE BEST NATURAL HARBORS IMAGINABLE,

a fact which no doubt led the admiralty to select it for the headquarters of the Pacific station. It is a hill-surrounded basin three miles by two with a uniform depth of from six to eight fathoms affording with its holding ground of tenacious blue clay, an excellent anchorage for the largest ironclads afloat. The proximity of large coal fields producing the only good coal on the entire Pacific coast of America, wealth which gives Vancouver Island its chief value, enhances the importance of Esquimalt. It is moreover the only British coaling station on the entire western littoral of the American continent, a circumstance of immeasurable moment in time of war, for coaling is nowadays the soul of naval warfare; without it the largest and most perfectly-fitted ironclad is a lifeless log, a plaything of wind and waves, a defenceless target for cruel foes of an inferior enemy, the sure prey of the first well-aimed torpedo launched against its iron sides on a dark night. That coal, of an inferior quality it is true, can be obtained at other non-British ports of the Pacific coast, has no bearing upon the issue under consideration, for, as need hardly be pointed out, English men-of-war in case of Anglo-Russian hostilities could not coal for cruising purposes at any other but Vancouver Island ports on the entire Pacific coast of North and South America, for in war time belligerent vessels are only allowed to load at other but their own harbors as much fuel as will carry them to the nearest port flying their own flag.

THE PACIFIC STATION IS THE LONGEST OF ALL,

extending from Behring's Straits to Cape Horn, over 10,000 miles in one direction alone, and only coaling station at its most northernly extremity of this vast stretch; and being the only one, one naturally expects to find this Gibraltar of the Pacific well protected. But is it so? If we expect or demaud an affirmative reply we have to visit some shaggy-haired breech-clouted Vancouver savage the visitor saw standing not many months ago on a rock overlooking the yards of this naval station, in an attitude not unlike that of the great exile of another though antipodal island, his arms folded over his naked breast, a cast off white man's stove pipe had pressed down on his brow. No doubt the noble naked man was profoundly impressed with what he saw, with the motley collection of cannon he was not skilled enough to know were superannuated muzzle loading guns of entirely obsolete type, carefully blackleaded on the outside, but rust-bitten in the core that in the usual order of things was left unprotected by the saving coat of paint; with the neat pyramids of ancient cannon balls; with the big ironclad lying motionless on the placid water of the bay; with the huge ruin of what was once intended to be a great dry dock, but which

WAS NOW CRUMBLING TO PIECES

like the arena at Rome, time and weather working faster than of yore in undoing the work of modern masons, be their wages even ten shillings a day. To our savage ruminating in the nakedness of mind as well as body all this seemed impressively formidable and grandly warlike, corpses scattered about handy for the fleshpot being the only feature that was wanting to complete his ideal picture of war. But suppose for a moment that yonder lounging strangely clad with his legs with the one he carelessly strolls hither and thither through the yards and naval store houses, nothing about him save his restlessly observant eye to betray the object of his apparently aimless sightseeing, is a more critical and more dangerous observer whose mental photographs of this picture will find a place in archives other than those at Spring gardens. What does he see? What does he note? First, that the full complement for the vast Pacific naval station consists of one ironclad, a fourteen-year-old second-class vessel, three corvettes and three sloops! Not a single torpedo-boat of any class or kind, not a single fort, and only one battery of one 9-ton gun to protect Esquimalt, no graving dock or dock of any kind nearer than Bermuda on the one side, and Sydney on the other side of the world, distances so vast that no vessel at all seriously injured could