The Colonist.

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PLAGIARISING IN THE PULPIT

We note some discussion in the papers on the alleged common practice of preachers to plagiarize in the preparation of their sermons, and if what is said is to be taken at its face value there is very much of this sort of thing done. Why any very serious objection should be taken to it we do not know. An eloquent preacher was once charged with using an idea and almost the identical language of another pulpit orator. He admitted that he might have done so, for he said "an idea is mine wherever I find it, and I do not feel called upon to interrupt the continuity of my sermon by telling my hearers that I am quoting some one else." He went on to say that there is such a thing as unconscious plagiarism. All newspaper men of long experience will confirm this. It is one of the commonest things for an editorial writer to have his own ideas repeated to him in almost his own words long after they appeared in print. There seems to be a mental process, which explains this. A newspaper reader is impressed with something in a paper, but after a little while it goes out of his mind. Subsequently circumstances bring back the idea dissociated from the newspaper, but presenting itself just as the paper expressed it. Then sometimes the reader will write a letter to the paper about it, and give the idea in almost the identical language in which it was expressed in the paper, perhaps many months before. And by the way, it may be added that this is one of the processes by which the press molds public opinion. If it is leading the thought of a community, its views make their impression at the time they are expressed, are apparently forgotten but come back again when the time is ripe for action, in the form of "original" ideas in the minds of perhaps a thousand people simultaneously. And so—but this is a digression—the newspaper man must, in the majority of cases be content to sow the seed and to be forgotten when the harvest is gathered, and, to digress a little further, this is one of the fascinations which editorial writing possesses. But to return to our plagiarists. Sometimes people are charged with plagiarism, when they are simply the victims of coincidence. Here again newspaper experience helps out the parsons. It is very common to find the simultaneous expression of identical views in almost identical language, in newspapers published thousands of miles apart and under circumstances which render collusion or plagiarism absolutely out of the question. Therefore when we hear a preacher charged with plagiarizing, we would like to hear what he has to say for himself before declaring him guilty.

Not that if he is guilty he has done anything worthy of condemnation necessarily. If the Apostle Paul, or Shakespeare, or the Bishop of London, or Henry Ward Beecher has advanced an idea and expressed it in language that cannot be improved upon, why should it be held obligatory on the part of a preacher to mangle the thought and spoil the language so that some one may not accuse him of plagiarizing? If he finds his hearers interested, and the thoughts and language of some one else seem to be the very things needed, why should he not give those thoughts and that language without saying where he got them? It all comes down to a question of common honesty. If a preacher or a writer attempts to palm off the sayings of others as his own, it is dishonest. If he uses them without stopping to give credit, each case must be judged by its own circumstances. It is easy to imagine cases where the whole effect of a quotation would be lost if the speaker said, either before or after it, where he had taken it from. To sum the matter up, much that is called plagiarism is the unconscious use of the thoughts and language of others; much of it is due to coincidence; much of it is perfectly defensible and really to be encouraged, and some of it is probably dishonest. The latter forms so small a proportion that it may safely be ignored.

THE FISHERIES QUESTION

The Ottawa organ of the Laurier government is rabid on all subjects relating to the government of British Columbia. It now alleges, that Mr. McBride has refused the overtures of Mr. Bastedo, representing the Dominion government in connection with the fisheries, and it says that this is done for the purpose of securing a new bone of contention, now that the matter of Oriental immigration has been got out of the way. It appears to make very little difference to the Ottawa paper whether what it says is true or false, provided it can create a hostile impression as to the conduct of the government of this province. The fact of the matter is that Mr. Bastedo came to British Columbia more on a "feeling" mission than anything else. The negotiations came to an end because he was not in a position to speak for the government which sent him here. Moreover it is not true that Mr. McBride is responsible for the raising of an issue between the province and the Dominion in regard to the fisheries. The open question is an old one, and was discussed between the two governments long before Mr. McBride came into office. May we further assure the Ottawa paper that nothing is further from Mr. McBride's desire than to stir up strife between the province and the Dominion? He is an ardent believer in the future of this province, and desirous of doing everything possible for its development. He is anxious to get all outstanding questions between the two governments disposed of, so that he may be able to devote his energies to the many and grave local problems calling for attention. Those who suppose that Mr. McBride has in mind in the exercise of his responsible duties first and foremost the achievement of party success, simply do not know the man. But he is young and can afford to be misunderstood for a little while. He is far from being simply a political partizan, as his opponents are learning every day, and as they will appreciate more fully by and bye.

In reference to the relations between the two governments on this particular subject, it may be noted that it was discussed with Sir Louis Davies, when he was Minister of Marine and Fisheries and a partial adjustment was reached. It was taken up afterwards with Mr. Prefontaine, Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. Brodeur. All of these federal ministers expressed themselves as desirous of reaching a settlement, but none has been arrived at, although the provincial authorities have time and time again urged that representatives of the two governments should get down to business. When Mr. Bastedo came to Victoria the provincial authorities hoped that he would be in a position to submit terms, to which they could assent, or would assent to terms satisfactory to them, or that in some way a compromise could be arrived at, which would be fair to both parties. But Mr. Bastedo's instructions do not appear to have been broad enough to enable him to act, so after he had heard what the provincial government had to suggest, all he could do was to return to Ottawa and submit the proposals to the Minister. That is how the matter stands. Since Sir Louis Davies had the matter in hand the Dominion government has made no earnest effort to reach a conclusion. That there is any open question of any kind whatsoever in regard to the fisheries is simply due to the fact that apparently the Dominion government does not want it to be closed. Whether this is because there are certain people who prefer to see the dispute remain unadjusted and the province deprived of its just rights, rather than that Mr. McBride and his colleagues should have what credit might attach to a settlement favorable to the province, or is owing to the unwillingness of the Dominion government to deal fairly by the province, we shall not undertake to say.

BRITAIN AND JAPAN.

Japan is our very good friend. We have a treaty with Japan. It is a very good treaty in some respects. It would be better, if the Canadian government had not very unwisely given Japan a right to dictate terms as to the entrance of her people into the Dominion. But just now everything is going along peacefully, and there are no clouds on the horizon that any one can see. But Japan is Japan, and the mind of Japan is absolutely inscrutable. The Japanese have their own standards by which they estimate things, and it is not unjust to say that what is good for the country is the supreme test of their conduct. Anything is right, if it will contribute to the glory and advancement of the empire. This is very laudable, in a sense, but it is also a very dangerous quality. It discounts the value of professions of friendship and weakens the force of alliances. No matter what the Japanese government may undertake to do, we must always read into the promise a proviso that it will hold good only as long as it seems well, in the interests of the nation, to keep it good. There is not such a thing as national gratitude anyway, and the lesson of history is that treaties are only good as long as it suits the convenience of both parties to stand by them. Far better than the most solemn agreement that diplomatists can frame is a friendly understanding between peoples based upon community of interests and intimate social relations. Britain has such an understanding with several European nations, and is rapidly reaching one with the United States; but there is none between us and Japan, and in the very nature of things there cannot be one for a long time to come. The following extract from the Ottawa Journal is apropos:

South Australia's Premier delivered a speech in London the other day that is attracting considerable notice, especially on the Pacific coast, both of the United States and Canada. He is reported to have said, among other things, referring to Japan and the awakening of the Far East: "If you are going to retain Australia as a jewel of the British crown some one has got to stand up and fight for it." Like other leading Australians who have spoken in England on this subject, he showed that the Commonwealth fears Japanese enterprise and Japanese ambition and the competition of Japanese labor, and desires to arouse a feeling throughout the Empire that sooner or later there will be a struggle for supremacy in the Pacific, for which all the self-governing British states should steadily prepare. Australia's coasts are inadequately protected and Canada it is represented, is particularly vulnerable on the Pacific side, and it would contribute to the sense of security in British Columbia, as well as in Australia, if the British admiralty were shortly to show some signs of carrying out the intention attributed to it recently, of bringing up the British naval strength on the Pacific to that of an effective fighting force capable of giving a good account of any fleet that Japan could send out of her own territorial waters. Although there is no confirmation of the reported decision of the British admiralty to make Esquimalt the headquarters very soon of a strong British Pacific fleet, it appears to be generally believed in circles where exact information would usually be looked for that such an intention really exists. But there is no immediate danger and no need to be in a hurry.

Of course there is no immediate danger and no need to be in a hurry. There never is. A few years ago every man in Russia would have told you so. It will be time enough to get ready when a hostile fleet is on its way across the Pacific. At the same time we venture to suggest that both Great Britain and Canada might well take into their very serious consideration the ways and means of making the Pacific coast of the Dominion safe against a possible invader from the sea. It is doubtless a severe reflection upon Twentieth Century civilization to say so, but the fact is that the only way to keep a country safe from invasion is to be able to repel an invader. The defenceless western coast of Canada is one of the weak spots in the British Empire. It invites an attack. If Japan wished she could take possession of this province in two weeks and all we could do would be to exhibit a righteous indignation. We are not anticipating any such event; we are simply stating that the Empire is without means of preventing such an event from happening.

HINDU PROBLEMS

"The Free Hindusthan," a monthly periodical published in Vancouver, invites the Colonist to discuss Hindu immigration and other problems from the Hindu point of view. We find this a difficult thing to do, because we have not sufficient knowledge of the subject to do so intelligently, and we hardly feel like accepting The Free Hindusthan's statements as all there is to be said on the question. But as everything relating to any part of the Empire is of interest to every other part of it, we may mention some of the views advanced by the periodical named. It tells us that the Hindus are a non-aggressive people, and have been forced to emigrate because of poverty, and this poverty it attributes to British rule. It says that Hindusthan is not over-populated as compared with some European countries and that there would be no need of emigration if the people were not taxed to death. It states that the average income of the people is only $3.00 per head, and of this 20 per cent goes in taxes. A general statement of this kind is sure to be misleading. Moreover it is difficult to believe that the estimate of income can be correct. If $3.00 a year is the average income, as we know that millions of people have a very much greater income than this, it would seem to follow that the bulk of the population has an income of very much less than one cent a day, which seems incredible. We are quite aware that what would be regarded as a pittance here would be affluence to some of the people of India, but we are not prepared to believe that millions upon millions of people subsist upon an income of a small fractional part of a cent a day. At least we are unable to deal with arguments based upon such a condition, because if people are so situated there must be other matters to be taken into account of which we in Canada know nothing at all. So also when we are told that 20 per cent of this infinitesimal sum is paid out in taxes, we cannot appreciate what this means, because we suppose that in India as in other countries taxes bear some relation to the ability of the taxed to pay them. The worst of all arguments are those based upon what is known as "the average man," for he is a creature that does not exist. Therefore, with every desire to understand the meaning of poverty among the Hindus, and its effect upon emigration, we are unable to do so from the facts set out by the Vancouver periodical.

Free Hindusthan tells us that during the last twenty-five years 25,000,000 people in India have died of starvation. Whether this number is correct or largely exaggerated, it must be admitted such deaths have been very many. But have the taxes of the people had any part to play in the tragedy? and were there not famines in India before British rule was inaugurated? Can it be truthfully stated that the condition of the mass of the Hindu people is not better for what Free Hindusthan calls "foreign occupation"? Were the masses of the people ever anything else than poor?

We are told that it is all right for Canada to exclude the natives of India, but at the same time the Vancouver periodical mentioned says: "We will ask our countrymen with all the emphasis that we can command that the exclusion of Britishers from Hindusthan is indispensable for our future existence." We are appealed to "if we have any sense of justice left" to aid in efforts to compel Great Britain to stop robbing the people of India. All this is very touching, and we would thing it more so if it did not read so uncommonly like the production of some one whose actual knowledge of India is not sufficient to qualify him to speak on the subject which he discusses.

THE HUDSON'S BAY RAILWAY.

It is announced that legislation is to be introduced into parliament during the present session to provide for the construction of a railway to Hudson's Bay. The salt water terminus of this railway will be Fort Churchill, which is at the mouth of the river of that name. It is about two degrees west of St. Paul, and about three degrees east of Winnipeg. From Churchill to the open ocean off Hudson's Bay the distance is not greater than from Winnipeg to Montreal, and the outlet of the straits is eight degrees east of Montreal. The degrees of longitude being shorter towards the north than in lower latitudes it follows that the distance across the Atlantic ocean from Hudson's Straits is much less in the latitude of the straits than it is further south. Hence the Hudson's Bay route will greatly shorten the distance from the wheat-growing area to the United Kingdom. There are other points in this connection that are worth mentioning and we shall endeavor in an early issue to bring them out so as to show the importance of the Hudson's Bay to the whole of Western Canada.

The region to be traversed by the proposed railway was thought at one time to be of no value except as a hunting ground, but recent explorations have shown that in regard to this as in many other matters the first opinions of people were not well founded, and while it must be conceded that a considerable part of the area is of no value from an agricultural point of view, much of it is, and there are other resources, notably timber, that will afford local traffic. Fort Churchill itself is close to the southern limit of the Barren Grounds and the area along the bay to the north of that point may be set down as of no use agriculturally. There are areas of forest, which will in time prove of value. There are also indications of mineral, but the region is absolutely unprospected. When the railway is built, so that people can reach the district with facility, it may reasonably be expected that important discoveries will be made. In the meantime the only reason for building the road is to furnish a short route for the carriage of grain to Europe.

SOCIALISM

The moderate character of the demonstrations on May Day in Europe has created the impression that Socialism is losing its force. If this proves to be the case, there will be no cause for surprise. Socialism is attractive to men who think, but if they continue to think, and do not accept the doctrine as a working basis for the organization and maintenance of society, it soon takes its place in their minds with other theories, which, while admirable in principle, are impossible in practice. Hence the reasons, which influence men to become Socialists, later influence them to withdraw from an active co-operation with those who seek to put the extreme principles of the doctrine into practical effect. We think this is a natural sequence, and hence will not be at all surprised to see Socialism rapidly lose its force as a separate factor in the determination of public policy, but become more influential than ever in promoting the public welfare. There will be fewer Socialists in name, but more in practice, only the hope of realizing the ultimate ideas of this school of thinkers will be postponed to some indefinite date in the future, and in the meantime there will be an effort to work in that direction. It is inevitable that this will be the history of the Socialist movement, for no organized body can consist wholly of enthusiasts and at the same time be sufficiently numerous and influential to dominate the State. There must be behind it some solid practical basis. It must be able to accomplish something specific. It cannot maintain itself on theories alone. The eternal question: What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed? presses for daily solution and abstract propositions are certain to be postponed until this has been disposed of. Yet we would not care to be understood as saying that many of the principles advocated by the Socialist will not be recognized in future legislation, for we believe they will be. Our idea is that the great mass of those, who have called themselves by that name, will cease to be political Ishmaelites, and will serve as a leaven to the whole body politic.

Japan has had its turn at a naval disaster. Peace hath her calamities as well as war.

Two million dollars for a terminal for the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern in Winnipeg is calculated to set one thinking.

Gold is to be made in Chicago at the rate of $100,000,000 a year. If that is the case, may we be permitted to ask: Wherefore this talk about business depression?

To raise the charge on water and to increase the charge on whiskey are matters at present engaging the attention of the city fathers. Truly the lot of an alderman is not a happy one.

The Times says that every problem before the Laurier government has been solved by the genius of its leader. This is somewhat tough on Sir Wilfrid's colleagues, but we suppose the truth has to be told.

"In the spring the little republics lightly turn to thoughts of revolution." This may be but a poor parody on Tennyson's famous couplet, but it serves well to indicate the present situation in South America.

The frequency with which announcements are made of the suicide of bank managers in the United States is gruesome evidence that depositors are not the keenest sufferers from the stress of a financial panic.

In view of the honorable gentleman's stout championship of the merits of those immigrants, the Doukhobors ought to be shipped East, addressed to "Hon. Frank Oliver, Ottawa, C. O. D." —the initials, of course, being an instruction to "clothe on delivery."

An enquiry is to be made in the House of Commons as to the status of the Yukon Gold Company. This is the flotation which Mr. Lawson of Boston made famous the other day. The government is to be asked what steps it took to protect the investing public. There will be general agreement that the subject is an eminently proper one for enquiry.

The Colonist is already on record in the matter, but it affords us pleasure to reiterate that the project now afoot looking to the establishment of a ferry system between Metchosin and Esquimalt has our very heartiest approval and support; and we trust that the present effort in this direction, being exerted by Mr. H. D. Helmcken, K.C., will bear immediate fruit.

A double daily service on the E. & N. is promised from and after June 1. This is a sign of the growing time which has now fairly set in on Vancouver island. The land-clearing scheme will also shortly be under way, and we are confident that the results will be such that the company will continue the work indefinitely, or as long as there is any land available.

Lord Milner is to pay a visit to Canada this fall. He would be sure of a warm welcome in any event, but his reception will be particularly cordial because we have not forgotten that the former high commissioner for South Africa displayed an ability in that important post which stamped him as one of the greatest living Imperialists as well as one of the foremost statesmen of the age.

The engagement of Miss Jean Reid, daughter of Whitelaw Reid, the United States ambassador to the Court of St. James, to the Hon. John Herbert Ward, a brother of the Earl of Dudley, is an announcement which will be received with pleasure by all who desire an increasing friendship between Great Britain and the United States. Nothing is calculated to contribute to the strengthening of the bond of sentiment, which to-day unites the two great nations, more certainly than the marriage of members of leading official families on each side of the water. It is a little extraordinary, however, that we hear of few cases where titled English girls marry rich young Americans.

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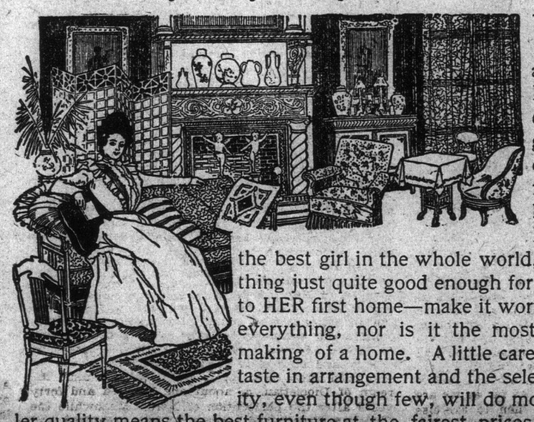

YES! Surprise her with a comfortably-furnished little HOME, showing evidence of your excellent good taste, your appreciation of home comforts and an attractive home, your thoughts of HER comfort. SHE is the best girl in the whole world, and there isn't anything just quite good enough for her. And she is going to HER first home—make it worth while. Money isn't everything, nor is it the most important item in the making of a home. A little care in the selection, good taste in arrangement and the selections of items of quality, even though few, will do more than money. Weiler quality means the best furniture at the fairest prices, and this is the best place for young housekeepers to get their every home need in the housefurnishing way. The experience of years is at your service absolutely free, and we shall be pleased to discuss this important matter with you at any time. Come in and let us show you how reasonably fair our prices are.

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British Cretonne—In floral and conventional designs, that are bright and cheerful. We show a splendid range. Priced at, per yard, 35c, 30c and.....25¢

British Chintz—A fine range of pretty and attractive designs in green and yellow, rose and green, pink and green, with blue ribbon. Per yard.....40¢

British Chintz—A very pretty and serviceable chintz with artistic designs, in various colorings on a jaspar ground, has a softening influence on the whole effect. It makes it the less liable to soil, yet does not detract from the daintiness. Price, per yard .....40¢

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