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THE PACIFIC COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER.

Saturday, April 19, 1884.

The condition of the sugar market is calculated to make many hearts uneasy, yet we do not think that any despairing views as to the immediate future of the country ought to be taken. When the prices obtained for our great staple were much higher and when every year saw a notable increase in the area planted with cane and of the exportable crop, the country was in point of fact going too fast. There was a constant attempt to undertake more work than there were hands in the country to do. The result was a casting about to the East and the West, the North and South, for laborers. But every effort, proved ineffectual to keep pace with the zeal for cane growing. As a consequence wages appear to be higher here for plantation laborers than in any other sugar producing country in the world. But there are signs that this sort of thing will right itself. We are continually importing laborers and though numbers go away every year, the actual total is every year made larger and this has been especially the case in the last two years. Meanwhile there has been a slackening of that constant effort to bring more and more land into cultivation for sugar producing purposes. It may perhaps be fair to assume that this effort will actually cease for a while in face of the present outlook of prices. If a decided check occurred when fair prices were ruling it seems certain that the hesitation or difficulty, (which ever be the cause) will be intensified by the discouraging state of the market. Meanwhile the laborers are still coming and something like equilibrium between supply and demand must eventually be established. The price of labor must then fall and possibly will fall as much as the price of sugar has done. When we consider how large a part of the cost of a crop of cane goes for wages, it is evident that a moderate fall in present rates would make an important difference in the cost of production. We may also note that what has happened with sugar, appears also to be the case with the other great absorbent of labor—rice culture. It has reached what is likely to be a maximum for some time to come. We cannot, therefore, avoid the conviction that a change for the better in the cost of labor is near at hand and that it will be such as largely to make up for the recent fall in prices of sugar.

The land in Merchant street which lies between the Post Office and Mr. Cunha's alley, is shortly to be offered for sale and we hope to hear of so much of it as would give a well-lighted access to the Waikiki side of the Post Office being acquired by the Government. It will be a great boon to the public if the Postmaster-General's suggestion on this subject can be carried out. The community has outgrown its Post Office accommodation, and for all that large majority of people who have no private boxes to obtain their letters through, the arrival of each mail entails a weary waiting round the single delivery window, where, at most, two officials only can attend to the wants of those enquiring for letters. The weariness of waiting is made more irritating by the struggle and push that must be made to secure a place at the window. If there could be three or four delivery windows on the Eastern side of the building, that now in use could be reserved

for the sale of postage stamps; the issue of money orders, etc. It often happens that some outward, or island, mail is about to close whilst an inward mail is being delivered, and but for the obliging way in which our booksellers supply their wants at much trouble and no profit to themselves, many people would at times be in *pekkia* for stamps for the letters they want to post. All these annoyances would be done away with if the scheme we are speaking of were carried out. So long as we are without that, still great desideratum, delivery by letter carriers, it is become absolutely necessary that some other reform be carried out, and this is decidedly the best way to accomplish it.

COMMERCIAL.

SATURDAY, April 19th, 1884.

During the week there has been a perceptible improvement in the retail trade, and this month will probably close with a better showing than the preceding month. Though the customs receipt are \$5,384 in excess of the quarterly average for 1883, it can hardly be estimated that the revenue for the current year will equal that of 1883 judging from the fall in the price of sugar and the high rate of exchange. As compared with the receipts of the corresponding quarter in 1883, the past quarter's receipts are \$24,039 \$0 in excess. This large increase is not due to a corresponding increase in the imports during the past three months, but to the payment of bonds falling due for goods released in December of last year when gold payments were demanded.

The exports for the week comprise the cargo per Oceanic S. S. Mariposa, consisting of 32,066 bags of sugar, 3,682 bags rice, 2,151 bunches bananas, 269 hides, 1,500 goat skins, 44 boxes betel leaves and 9 packages sundries, \$6,187 in coin; total value \$220,593 32. The arrivals for the week comprise H. B. M. S. Constance from Pitcairn Island, P. M. S. S. City of Sydney from the Colonies, schooner Chas. Hanson from San Francisco and the tern Dora Bluhm from Puget Sound.

The departures include the P. M. S. S. City of Sydney and S. S. Mariposa for San Francisco, Excelsior for Port Townsend, Selina for Astoria, and H. B. M. S. Constance for Vancouver, B. C. The bark Kalakaua is loading rapidly and will be dispatched for San Francisco with a full cargo on or about Tuesday next.

Sugar has come to hand freely during the week from all directions, amounting to 35,000 pkgs in all. The average outturn of the mills so far is in excess of the past year, but owing to the low rates that are ruling, the results will not be so profitable.

Being without advices from the Coast since the arrival of the S. S. Mariposa with dates to the 1st instant the arrival of the S. S. Zealandia is anxiously looked for. Should she come in to-day, we will be placed in possession of dates to the 12th instant. The S. S. Alameda is due on Tuesday next with dates to the 15th instant.

The latest to hand about rice is that Hawaiian is very strong, chiefly, in consequence of Eastern demand, and jobbers are asking (March 28th) \$5 25 to \$5 52 per 100-lb bags, according to sample.

Several valuable lots of land, both in the city and on the other islands, will be sold by auction on the 28th instant.

The bark Sir William Wallace from Newcastle, N. S. W. with coals, is due, also the barks Clan Grant, from Liverpool; Spica from Bremen; and the Abbie Carver, from New York, may be looked for at any time before the end of this month.

CORRESPONDENCE.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the statements made, or opinions expressed by our correspondents.

HAWAIIAN SILVER COINS.

MR. EDITOR:—A deal of blatherskite talk has been heard on the street about the true worth of the Kalakaua dollars. That they are of the same value as the silver coins of the same denominations of the United States, the certificate of the assayer of the mint where they were coined, already published, ought to be proof positive. Still some knowing ones shake their heads, and say they are worth as bullion no more than Peruvian sols. To settle the matter once

for all, let some disinterested person send one hundred dollars to San Francisco by the Mariposa to-morrow, and dispose of them to the mint for what they are worth as bullion, and get the voucher of the sale from the superintendent of the mint. This will settle the thing beyond a doubt. Now where's the man with public spirit enough to move to the front?

A TRADESMAN.

THE CHINESE INVASION.

MR. EDITOR:—Here as well as elsewhere the question is often asked what is the nature of the enmity against the Chinese? It is oftener asked than answered. Forty years ago the gates of China were opened for trade by the British Government, and the result is something for European and American statesmen to contemplate with no means of solution. The Chinese with their teeming millions and habits of industry, and their economical way of living on their native food (rice) and with a civilization and literature that dates back into centuries long past, in fact further back than our own history of the world dates, cause the question to be asked what is the reason for these people being so different from all others? They have seen Kingdoms and Empires come into existence and arrive at maturity, and afterwards dwindle away and almost forgotten by the world, only leaving a trace of their existence on a few pages of history.

This people that the world looks upon with so much contempt, calling them heathens, have an outlandish speech and unintelligible (to us) written characters that were used to convey men's thoughts from one to the other more than four thousand years ago, which brings down the history of a nation that we now look upon with astonishment as we come to know them. One of their learned Emperors and leaders taught and had it proclaimed throughout the Empire that all the religions then in China were not founded upon reason or truth and advised this people to have nothing to do with any of them.

Any Chinaman can worship according to his will, so long as he does not meddle with Government affairs. When that takes place he and all those connected with him are disposed of in such manner that they will give no more trouble for a long time. They go to no expense in keeping criminals in China, and if any one wishes to go out of existence he has only to commit a crime that does not necessitate torture for the purpose of extorting a confession and he is disposed of by having his head chopped off and his body is allowed to mingle with its mother earth.

But to return to the question. The Chinamen are here and what can be done about it? I say, they are the bone and sinew of the country. They care nothing about the Government or politics, so long as they are left in peace to plod along and gather the fruits of their labor year by year which they finally take back to their own country.

There are two things that cannot be made of a Chinaman; the one is a politician, and the other is a Christian. Politics impossible, Christianity only possible if he can gain anything by it. The testimony of the Catholic Fathers that have carried on their missions in China for more than three hundred years will bear me out in the above assertion. What can a Chinaman's opinion be of the Christian religion? The Protestant Missionaries only arrived after the ports were opened by the English after what is improperly called the opium war. Two rivals in the field teaching the same religion, Christianity; and entirely hostile to each other. The educated Chinaman looks upon both with contempt and why should he not do so? His reason must tell him that where there is so much contention, it is not his soul they want to save but they have some other motive of which he is ignorant.

When the Chinaman leaves this country he takes his earnings with him as people of other nationalities do, and leaves his temporary profession of Christianity behind him. As far as I know, all nationalities residing in this Kingdom have the same rights of property and can make what use of them that they choose.

Asking as a favor that you publish the above, I am, etc., etc.

W. E. W.

COLONIAL NEWS.

The P. M. S. S. City of Sydney arrived on Sunday night bringing dates to the 1st instant. The following are the principal items of news from the Colonies:

Sydney, March 29.—Hanlan gave an exhibition of rowing at Manley this afternoon, when he pulled a race with Edwards, his trainer. Neither Trickett nor Clifford was present, as expected. Fully 8,000 persons witnessed Hanlan's performances.

Melbourne, March 29.—Rumors are current here that Sir William Jervois will receive the appointment of Governor of Victoria, that Sir William Robinson, Governor of South of Australia, will succeed Sir William Jervois in New Zealand, and that Major-General Scratchley will be appointed Governor of South Australia.

Sydney, March 29.—Bishop Barry will be installed on Sunday, 22d April.

The trading company of thirty adventurers which was being organized by Mr. A. Kennerley to proceed to New Guinea, has collapsed.

The prospectus has been issued of the proposed New Zealand Land Loan Company, with a capital of £1,000,000 in 500 shares.

At a dinner recently given in Auckland on board the New Zealand Shipping Company's steamer Ruapehu, Sir Frederick Whitaker in proposing the toast of the evening, "Success to the New Zealand Shipping Company" said that he thought the whole feature of trade between New Zealand and Great Britain would be altered when the Panama Canal was opened, when New Zealand instead of being the farthest of all the Australian colonies, would be the nearest to England.

The Australian cricket team sailed for England in the steamer Sutlej on the 15th March.

THE PANAMA CANAL.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR'S OPERATIONS AND PROGNOSTICS FOR THE FUTURE.

Lieut. R. P. Rodgers has just made to Admiral G. H. Cooper a lengthy and detailed report on the progress of the Panama Canal. After going over the entire line, section by section, showing what has been accomplished, the report concludes as follows: Looking back upon the past year, while it is evident that much important work has been done and a considerable excavation made, yet I believe that the expectations of a year ago have not been fully realized; and this may be accounted for by the fact that the work of installation of the sections of so gigantic an enterprise requires much time, and that the port of Aspinwall and the Panama railway have not afforded sufficient means for the discharge and transportation of material. The capacity of the railway has been more than doubled, seventeen trains daily passing over the road at present, instead of the eight of a year ago, and when the quay of the Terre-plein is completed and its water front dredged, the discharge of vessels and the delivery of their cargoes along the line will be greatly expedited.

The uniform slope of 1-1 has been fixed upon for the sides of the canal, except in the rocky sections, where the slopes will be more abrupt, and in the lower and swampy lands, where they will be less inclined. The cross sections given in my report of last year have been substantially adhered to.

It is the present intention to ballast the sides of the canal below the water level; to have a banquette a few feet above this level to afford a passage way, and to relevel the upper slopes with vegetation, which in this region spreads and grows with remarkable rapidity, and which it is thought will amply protect them from washing.

The number of men now employed in all sections is probably at least 15,000, brought principally from Jamaica and Carthagena, and the amount of excavation has gradually increased until 700,000 cubic metres per month have been reached. It is hoped that the month of February will produce 1,000,000 cubic metres, and that later the amount of 2,500,000 metres will be removed each month. The rainy season begins in May and continues till December, and it is estimated that the rains will reduce the excavation of the dry season by one-fifth, so that it is not unlikely that from the 1st of May next, an annual excavation of 25,000,000 cubic metres may be counted upon. And this leads to a consideration of the date of completion of the works.

The year 1888 has been announced by M. de Lesseps for the opening of the canal. It is not impossible, with the requisite money, that the sections of the canal, exclusive of those of Obispo, Empire, Culebra, and Paraiso, may be ready for service within the time specified; but it does not seem possible that these most formidable sections, with their cuts of great depth and width can be made ready, nor that the ports at the extremities can be completed for some years later. Consider the section of Culebra, with its great excavation of more than twenty-five millions of cubic metres, and suppose that the large amount of 300,000 cubic metres be removed each month from it. At this rate it would take seven years to complete this section.

It is impossible for me to know the financial condition of the company; but from more than one source I infer that about \$40,000,000 have thus far been expended (not including the cost of the Panama Railway).

There is an immense amount of machin-

ery and materials now on hand or contracted for, and it is probable that there remain sufficient funds from the amount already subscribed to meet promptly the current expenses for two years to come.

After that, with the enterprise well begun and with a fair proportion of the whole excavation already removed, it would seem plausible that the prestige of M. de Lesseps' name and the confidence which the investors of France have in his ability to carry through successfully this great work would procure the further necessary subscriptions. Whether the estimated sum—600,000,000f.—will prove sufficient, time alone can decide; but as one-third of this amount has already been expended it would seem insufficient to complete this most formidable undertaking.

The climate has thus far not proved so fatal in most of the sections as might have been anticipated. Of course, exposure to the sun, heat and fatigues have produced fevers and have occasioned mortality; but as a rule the employees of the company seem in fair health, and the Europeans have suffered more than the laborers, natives of the tropics. But, while most of the sections have not been very sickly, the neighborhood of Panama has proved an exception to the general rule. Here during the past six months, have appeared, in larger numbers than usual, pernicious fevers, and there have been several cases of yellow fever which have proved fatal.

It appears to me that the question whether this is or is not a better route than that of Nicaragua has almost passed from the problem of inter-oceanic communication.

The work here has been fairly begun; large quantities of machinery and material for transportation have been collected and are now upon the isthmus, and unless some government should undertake a similar project at another point it does not seem probable that any private capital available for such an enterprise, would lose the benefits of the detailed studies, the work already done and the money already expended upon the route of the Panama Canal.

I am, Admiral, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

RAYMOND P. RODGERS.

Rear Admiral G. A. Cooper, United States Navy, commanding United States naval forces on North Atlantic Station.—[S. E. Call.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES.

A Mr. Barnett has invented a new accumulator, or storage battery, which is being talked about by electricians, and is now on trial at Paddington Railway Station. This new battery is claimed to be superior to any hitherto constructed, as with it the loss of current in ordinary work is less than ten per cent. It is proposed to employ the battery for lighting trains. Hitherto the chief failing of storage batteries has been the loss of current, and if the experiment prove Mr. Barnett's claim to be correct, his battery will not only be an undoubted advance in practical electric lighting, but it will be economical as well. We shall hear more of it before long, as it has been in active experiment for some time back, but its fame is only just getting wind.

Of course there is a reason for everything, and Dr. Moffat's explanation how it is that Italy is so famous for the splendid voices of her singers may be correct, but it is difficult to prove it. He has recently stated that the Italian voice owes its softness and beauty to the peroxide of hydrogen in the atmosphere. The atmosphere receives it (so we understand from other sources) through the agency of pine trees. From which the inference might be drawn that if we desire to have good voices for singing we should plant abundant pine forests.

Recent investigations into the natural history of the costly phylloxera point to the fact that the ravages of this pest are much decreased when the vines are planted in sandy soils. The French vines grafted on American stocks, and planted in such soils, have been almost entirely protected from phylloxera. This indicates that the indigenous vines have been recruited in native vigor by the grafting process. I have little doubt that, what with interplanting—that is, always propagating by cutting from the same kind and stock of vines—and exhaustion from the soil all its potash, or nearly so, the old vineyards have become so weakened they are immediately prostrated by any kind of parasitical attacks, whether of parasitic fungi or phylloxera. The best defence is to make such plants as strong and vigorous as we can, by intergrating, supplying sufficient supplies of manure of the proper sort, containing all the necessary mineral salts as vegetable food—and then we might fairly let nature have its way.