

be gained by imposing the exclusive restriction against others, as it is quite likely that the gold of the bleak and barren Yukon will not maintain a very much larger population than is either there already or now making thither. The work of the season of 1897-8 remains to be done and the results determined, ere it can with any confidence be asserted that there is room with advantage for any further very large influx into the Yukon. It cannot be said that up to the present there has been anything to prove the Yukon a richer gold field on the whole than was the Cariboo placer country of old, and the latter far easier and better situated region at no time attracted—even in its palmiest days—more than a moderate mining population, not numbered by more than between 10,000 and 20,000 souls. Under these circumstances the Yukon is assuredly no field for an oftentimes perilous policy of "rush," and it is best for governments, as well as for individuals, to go slow in their action in regard to our very far north gold field.

#### MISCHIEVOUS ENCOURAGEMENT.

It is practically certain that not one in four of the several hundred persons who sailed a few days ago from Victoria to the Yukon, will reach Klondyke ere winter sets in by the way, with all its accustomed pitiless rigor. Some of the better appointed, including, no doubt, the Mounted Police detachment, which will receive all possible aid, official and otherwise, will get thither with difficulty and in time to accomplish part of their purpose before the Yukon thermometer falls to 50 below zero, and winter storms and blizzards begin to rage at frequent intervals.

As to the others, it may safely be predicted that not a few of the more sensible will speedily return, disappointed, to winter at some coast town, and wait until spring, ere again making northwards. Others will, meanwhile, push on and camp by the way in tents amid the mountains, with nothing to do during the long and severe winter, to the severity of which many will succumb. This we assert on the authority of many an old Yukoner, despite the specious special pleading of the Victoria Colonist, which, holding a brief for Victoria's outfitters, would fain encourage a most dangerous venture that in the case of most of the rash wayfarers had better be postponed till spring, especially as it is certain that they will miss no chances by such

chances of misery and privation, oftentimes even unto death.

The very pleading of the Colonist shows a parlously bad case and cause. Our contemporary urges that the wayfarers can select a sheltered place in the timber, so nicely snug and sheltered in fact, that to avoid freezing to death the people in the tents must bank snow all round their canvas dwellings. Then the situation wont be worse for the Yukon pilgrims—says our contemporary—than was that of the United Empire Loyalists tented outside Fredericton N.B., in 1783-4. The Colonist thus ignores the fact that these Loyalists suffered in this and otherwise so terribly for their devotion to their king and country that they are, one and all, rightly accounted heroic and their memories cherished accordingly by a grateful United Canada.

Following up this ancient and misleading argument, the Colonist adds that those who fail to get across the Yukon passes, will be more uncomfortable, for the weather will be severe and changeable, which means that the plight of many of them will be terrible indeed, the fate of those who winter in the wilds across the mountains being assuredly trying enough, especially for the "tenderfeet," of whom so many of the emigrants are composed. And of course it is nonsensical for our venerable contemporary to assert that there will be a month or two of good weather yet in and about the Yukon passes when already many a time descriptions seem to speak of deluges of chilling rain, heavy falls of snow, and streams swollen to torrents, troubles which have already begun to claim their large appointed toll of victims.

Thank Heaven few more steamers can now sail for Dyea from Victoria or elsewhere, before further travel to the Yukon becomes for all practical purposes impossible for the season in the case of all but the one man exception in the hundred, which fact, we may also be thankful, is likely to be fairly widely known despite this unjustifiable encouragement given by the Colonist to a tardily taken present venture, that will be in all cases dangerous, in most profitless and in many fatal. We are glad indeed that the Vancouver press has, as a rule, declined altogether to imitate the example set by the Colonist. Doubtless the outfitters of the Terminal City have thus lost something, but they have lost it in the cause