

THE WEEKLY BRITISH COLONIST

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THE BRITISH COLONIST

EVERY MORNING. (Sundays Excepted.) AT VICTORIA, B. C.

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FEDERATION OF THE COLONIES

Our files of Canadian papers, since the announcement of the scheme of colonial federation, would indicate that the movement meets with general favor among the Canadian people. The elections which have taken place, consequent on the acceptance of office of several of the members of the Opposition, show, in their result, that public opinion sanctions this experiment for healing up the sectional difficulties of the two Provinces, and enlarging the area of political ambition in the British Possessions of North America. It is intrusive in all such movements to watch the progress of ideas. Not very many years ago, to attempt to federate the North American Provinces, would have been looked upon in England as nothing short of an endeavor to Americanize the British portion of the continent. To promulgate the doctrine of colonial independence would have been regarded as an act of hostility to Great Britain. We know that even in the discussion of the Canadian Union Act the Imperial authorities had the idea of a federation of the two Provinces before them, but they would have shrunk with horror from any further extension of the federal system. Now, however, British public opinion seems quite content that the colonies should manage their own affairs in their own peculiar way, and even that staunch organ of legitimacy—the London Times—advocates colonial independence, and believes that Canada will take her just place at no very distant period among the foremost nations of the earth. All this is gratifying, for no other reason than that it shows that the English mind is beginning to look upon the English colony as something that has a right to a separate existence and a separate individuality, and that British colonialists may reasonably aspire to become citizens of a nation of their own creating, without subjecting themselves to the charge of treason.

There was a time when we must confess, we entertained even a higher destiny for the colonies than individual or confederate independence. We thought that with far-seeing statesmen at the head of affairs at home, a policy might have been inaugurated, sufficiently comprehensive in its outlines to have embraced in time a grand confederation of the whole British race from Newfoundland to New Zealand, and formed an Empire, colossal in size and atlantic in strength—an empire that would have made the name of Briton greater than that of Roman in Rome's palmy days, and a prouder boast than even the civis Romanus sum. The task was, however, too great for the pigmies who have managed our colonial affairs. Their highest idea of Imperial statesmanship was to keep the colonies as long as possible in leading strings, and only grant them the rights of self government and responsible rule, when the inhabitants had been forced into armed collision with Imperial soldiers. No man, indeed, of intellectual greatness has ever fallen upon a Secretary of State for the Colonies. The office seems to have been especially reserved for the common place routine-mongers of every Ministry, and its importance has been almost ignored amid the straining after diplomatic victories in foreign affairs. Instead, therefore, of some far-seeing national policy, we have had nothing but a thing of makeshifts, which banishes all idea of colonial and Imperial consolidation, and leaves us to that centrifugal force which is every day taking us farther and farther away from the Mother country. There is, therefore, but one course open to the British colonies, especially those of North America and Australia,—federation

and ultimately independence. Before ten years shall have expired, the population of the colonies between Vancouver Island and Newfoundland will fall little short of six million souls, occupying a territory as large as the United States before the civil war, and more than three-fourths the size of the whole of Europe. With telegraphic and railway communication from the one ocean to the other, and with a federal union that will collect and concentrate the various colonial interests, representing the various colonial interests, what country can have a greater future before it than this gigantic confederacy, with its illimitable diversified resources. The time is, indeed, not far distant when, as an integral part of this new-born nation, we shall assist in sending Ambassadors and Consuls to every part of the world, our flag shall float proudly from an extensive mercantile marine, and our American neighbors will find in the country north of them, a competitor in the peaceful arts, in commerce and manufactures, greater than they ever dreamed would have arisen from the sometimes underrated "Canaanites." England will of course have lost much of her national prestige; but relieved of the burden of colonial defenses, she will be enabled to reduce, by many million pounds sterling, her enormous expenditure, and advance with renewed vigor on the road of progress, feeling satisfied of one thing, that if she has lost the sovereignty of her colonies, she has gained what is of much more importance under present circumstances, a new, firm, and steadfast ally.

SUPREME COURT

[BEFORE CHIEF JUSTICE CAMERON.] Monday, Aug. 29.

Assignee of Rabson v. Millington.—This was an action instituted by W. Culverwell, Official Assignee in the estate of Rabson (deceased) against the defendant, J. M. Bishop, for the value of a farm laborer for six months past. I have also before me Gold Stream diggings. Since I have been here I have done everything almost to a living at times half starved, at times plenty, at one time I was two days and a half without grub. When I first arrived on the 10th of January, 1863, it was midwinter, snow several feet deep on the ground, and no work to be had for love or money. In fact the place was quite played out, and by the time that my money was in a pretty bad fix. The first job I got on was to dig a little water, and drive a wagon at a dead water manufactory. The next digging ground for a nigger—the next minding and grooming horses for a Yankee, the next a day laborer, the next selling seeds on commission, then working at the mines, and finally, the digging of a certain box-drain to be constructed on the north side of View street. The requisition was headed in and the signature of the defendant admitted. P. W. Green, City Surveyor, was examined and proved the contract for the drain in question with Mr. Titus for \$1,775. An additional outlay of about \$200 had been found necessary. Witness had certified to the completion of the work. On cross-examination by Mr. Copland, witness said there was a question in the contract about removing the mound, it was required there for grading the street. The drain was double the size wanted, and answered all the purposes for which it would allow. The average depth was about 8 feet. The lower lots might be drained into the main drain by incurring a slight expense on each lot. Mr. Austin was recalled and cross examined by Mr. Copland on the receipt of the requisition and the general proceedings thereon and the case was then adjourned to Monday next for the production of all necessary documents.

PALMAM QUI MERUIT PERAT.

EDITOR COLONIST.—In a specious and plausible letter in your publication of Saturday, "Historicus" seeks to arrogate to himself the credit of the recent gold discoveries in this island, and robs His Excellency the present Governor of the well earned title to the compliment presented in the address of the Legislative Council. I am sorry to see a gentleman of such well known writing powers distort facts to serve his purpose—facts well known to all your readers, but never seen in the "green and yellow" light thrown upon them by your contributor. Far be it from me to detract from the wisdom and success of the past gubernatorial policy; still, I might suggest that whereas the motto of the past administration has very rightly been *Spero Meliora*, that of the present is "God helps them who help themselves." The Legislative grant of \$25,000 was not for 1864, but for 1863, part of it having been expended upon the Goldstream road, prior to the arrival of Governor Kennedy; the remainder of this vote would have most probably lain dormant, and hibernating for a considerable period, were it not that the present governor stirred up the stagnant enterprise of our fellow townsmen, by offering two dollars for every one dollar subscribed. If "Historicus" will recall the tenor of some of the speeches made at the public exploration meeting, he will see that the fact of Governor Douglas hesitating to forward a liberal exploration of the island, was referred to, and animadverted upon. Why then now grant the laurels where they are not due? If you are to contest the priority of title "to the merit of discovery," it is those who have, year by year, urged the matter upon the late administration, and who but now have entered into the fruits of their labors. All honor

to the exploring party, and to the exploring committee, but let no one cast dirt upon the Legislative Council when they say, "that the merit of the gold discovery is principally due to His Excellency's earnest and energetic advocacy of the exploration of the Island," nor assert that the object was to pass off a cheap compliment to His Excellency, by the name of P. M. MINCKLEY.

THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA.

Mr. Winwood Reade, in a letter to the Times, says: The Ashantee war having just attracted so much attention from the public, some remarks on bush wars in general may possibly interest your readers. Along the whole margin of the West Coast of Africa, from St. Louis, Senegal, on the north, to Benguela, on the south, there is not a single spot which is fit for inhabiting. This gigantic range of territory is one continuous pool of fever, dysentery, and everything which is deadly and detestable. I except a strip on the Cameroons mountains, which Captain Burton has wisely recommended as a sanitarium. At the best of times the military hospitals are always tolerably full. Amalgam, then, the horrors of a campaign in such a country. Every night the army is attacked by an irresistible malarial fever, the malarial of the swamps. Then there is always a poor supply of food, and the Gold Coast sheep and cattle can only be obtained in small quantities. There are no good spots to be found on the coast, where the woods with their swamps, engagements consist simply in a series of ambushes, and for the style of warfare Western Africa is admirably suited. Nature appears to have created these forests and swamps for the preservation of the heated negro, as she has provided the porcupines, the armadillo, and the alligator with hideous and impenetrable coverings. Now, one need not be blest with a military genius to understand that offensive warfare under such circumstances is scarcely to be recommended, and the inane raid which has just been made against the Ashantees is, perhaps, the most curious instance of human ignorance and presumption which can be found among the blunders of colonial history.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The following correspondence appeared in a recent number of the London Times, and is worthy of republication, if only to afford a hearty laugh to our readers. The "whisky" specimen from the young colonist, which is deemed deserving of a place in the great leading journal, is scarcely less pregnant with absurdities than other specious purporting to throw light upon affairs in British Columbia, which have found their way into the London papers.

These who have had the honor to receive your issue of the 11th inst., will readily understand how this kindred spirit selected the letter in question from his voluminous correspondence. (To the Editor of the Times.) Within the last twelve months scores of letters have been offered to me for publication, which, however, I declined to accept, as I was not certain of the position of the writer. In this case I know Mr. Minckley to be an enterprising, courageous, and plucky fellow, who would not be out of employment for an hour, if he could help it, and who certainly would not "fold up his hands to any selfish work."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant, D. G. F. DONALD, 13, Royal Exchange, London, E. C.

My dear Mother.—At last I begin my long wished-for letter, for since I know it is to you I dare say you have not been able to account for my long silence. Had I have been knocking about so here and there, hardly had time. I have been living in the bush, working as a farm laborer for six months past. I have also been to Gold Stream diggings. Since I have been here I have done everything almost to a living at times half starved, at times plenty, at one time I was two days and a half without grub. When I first arrived on the 10th of January, 1863, it was midwinter, snow several feet deep on the ground, and no work to be had for love or money. In fact the place was quite played out, and by the time that my money was in a pretty bad fix.

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It is generally supposed that the negroes are a ferocious race, who assassinate, white men, whenever they can do so with impunity and who attach the same relish to blood from a human skull as we do to "20 port from a dusty cobwebby bottle." But I must assert that I have found the negroes timid, effeminate, courteous, thorough men of the world, kind to their relations, and when their fears of their relations are allayed, they are not a whit less brave than our own soldiers. Above all, they have great commercial foresight. They receive from us white men these luxuries which have now become their necessities—the cotton cloth with which they clothe themselves; the glass beads which they intersperse themselves; the powder and guns with which they shoot us when we leave them no alternative. I will prove how reluctant they are to make use of this detested re-armor. A submitter, who many months ago went up the coast, with the first expedition (long before the British public heard of these things), informed me that on one occasion he secured an ambulance of 200 Ashantees, as they afterwards discovered from some men whom the Fantia had taken prisoner. When asked how it was they had not fired, they replied that they had received orders from the king not to hurt the white man, and that they were the Fantia's men, and if you go to war with us on account of these fellows we will not fight with you." In this first campaign at all events they kept their word. The detested return of the Fantia, which was seen as Ashantian, all the fighting having been done by the Fantia, our allies.

Under ordinary circumstances, the coast colonies are garrisoned by one of the West India regiments. They are sent there, not in aid, for the protection of the colony, but in a good deal of military protection among the French, the English, and the Portuguese colonies, and I can affirm that trade receives that kind of protection from military forces which the brazen pot in *Aesop's Fables* was desirous of offering to the clay one. It is military protection which has ruined several Lisbon firms by its conduct in Angola, and which is now choking commerce on the Gold Coast.

The real wealth of Africa is extracted from her oil rivers—the Calabars, Brass, Bonny, and Benue. In these rivers, where there is no military protection, the white man is never seen in Bonny he is *ju-ju*;—that is to say he is an article of fetish, like the iguano, or any other sacred animal, which none may injure under pain of death. Sometimes, it is true, the traders have bad debts. Then they send to Consul Burton, at Fernando Po, who sends a gunboat into the river, which lies over the town till it pays.

The negroes are really afraid of men-of-war, and of the great guns which guard our colonial towns. But they laugh at our drilled negroes, who must indue out a sorry figure, floundering through swamps, or marching in "beautiful order," into ambushes. It appears to me, and I have studied this matter very carefully on the spot, that these unhappy men, and their still more unhappy officers, are useless in West Africa, and that it is to all intents and purposes an act of cruelty to send them there. These colonies could raise a militia quite capable of manning their cannon and of defending their homes; and for purposes of invasion, a Napoleonic army would melt away in those great swamps like snow. As for the rivers, gunboats could be run once a month; this service would be one of danger on account of the climate, and the pay should therefore be raised in proportion. Still it would be one of impunity compared with that which the soldiers now suffer on the coast; for the former have it always in their power to escape to that great sanitarian—the sea.

A NUISANCE.—A large number of Fort Rapet Indians have encamped on their old location on Laurel Point, this side of Lang's shipyard. Their presence gives much annoyance to the residents in that neighborhood, and they should be removed by the police to their own proper quarters on the reserve.

MAIL STEAMER.—Letters received in town intimate that the Brother Jonathan, which was to leave San Francisco on the 24th or 25th for Portland, would, in all probability, bring up a number of passengers suffering from the measles. She will be due here on Wednesday.

RUSSIAN BARBARITIES IN POLAND.—Accounts from Warsaw, of the 2nd inst., state that 300 persons, sentenced to Siberia, had set out on the 22nd ult. The greater number of them belonged to the upper classes. They were dressed like convicts, their heads shaved, and chained together two and two. Several of these wretched prisoners died of hunger and cold. More frightful accusations are made, and women have torn the skin from their faces and otherwise disgraced themselves to save themselves from the gallantry of their oppressors. In Lithuania, Moscowvitch reported the population of entire villages. Such has been the fate of the inhabitants of the village of Prujany, whose crime was to have bastinadoed a person whose conduct appears to have merited that punishment. The goods of the victims were sold to the Russian officers, as usual, having laid hands upon whatever was near valuable. The hands of the inhabitants of Prujany were distributed to Russian cultivators brought from the neighborhood of Moscow. Mouravieff has, by a recent decree, declared every master who may be guilty of speaking any other language than Russian to his servants liable to a fine of 500 rubles. The Russians hanged lately in the district of Gostyn a patriot named Enoch Scholemann, who had carried himself with glory in the struggle against the enemy. The cord broke twice, and twice the victim fell to the ground. Cannon Zinowicki was fined 50 rubles for not having taken off previously to the execution the cross suspended round the victim's neck. Crosses erected in the village expose the inhabitants to heavy fines, and are finally torn down by the Russians.

CONNOISSEURS IN PAINTING.—A good story is going round of the painting-rooms. It is to the effect that two people were seen last week looking at Sir Edwin Landseer's noble picture of the bears in the Arctic regions growing over the broken mast, when one of the gazers was heard to say to the other, "Look, Jim, they've tore down the North Pole!" A friend told me, as a companion to this, that on Whit-Monday he saw several people in the Pantheon surrounding Haydon's picture of "Curtius Leaping into the Gulf," under the full impression that the hero was Garibaldi; while another friend relates that during the Exhibition he saw a party of "swells" halt before Delacroix's "Floating Martyr," when the foremost of them, a lady, said, "Here it is again! Oh dear, how sick I am of this Colleen Bawn!"—London Letter.

THE AGINCOURT.

The following detailed account of the formidable war-steamer Agincourt, now being built for Her Majesty's Government, at Messrs. Laird's ship-building yard, Birkenhead, will be read with interest.

The Agincourt is, as it may be remembered, a ram, having a propulsion under water, in front of her stern; her length is 220 feet, and she is of 6620 tons builders' measurement; and she is propelled by six engines of 1250 horse-power, made by Messrs. Maudslays, Sons, and Field, of London, who also supply the boilers. These are ten in number and weigh 25 tons each. They are to be so arranged as to be fired separately, or all together, as may be required. The following is a list of the principal particulars of the machinery:—The shafts of the main engines are 54 inches thick, and each weighing on an average about 5 tons, is now fixed on the vessel to the extent of fully three-fourths of its whole quantity; the actual quantity which is permanently fixed, amounting to upwards of 1300 tons. The deck coverings, bulwarks, and cutwaters, are nearly completed, and are in course of being carried and dressed off. The hammering of the bars and rails are in their places along the port side, those for the stanchions being also in place, and ready to allow the machinery to be run as easily as on a level. The general fittings below, including the cabin, stores, magazines, &c. are all in an advanced state, and several of them are already completed. In point of fact, so far as can be judged, the casual though been inspected, the vessel appears to be nearly or altogether three-quarters of the way advanced towards thorough completion. As has been already stated, nine of the boiler tubes have already arrived, and the travelling cranes intended specially for fitting such boiler tubes, are also in place, and the machinery mass has been completed. It is capable of raising thirty tons, and carrying that weight to a point above the boiler-tubes, and out of this boiler, it is said, will certainly be fixed at this week, and the remaining nine with the least possible delay. Considerable progress has been made in bedding and fitting the screw shafts; the rudder-trunk, a huge mass of millable iron, weighing upwards of 12 tons, was yesterday conveyed down the quay to the stern of the vessel, with a view to its being immediately fixed. When completed, the Agincourt will have five tubular steam engines, all of which are nearly ready, and lying alongside of the ship on the quay; and everything gives every prospect of an energetic and rapid progress, and an immense body of workmen swarming about the ship, and attending every part of the establishment, all busy and active in the performance of their important operations; and all giving promise of the early completion of this gigantic undertaking.

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FOR SPOKE EVERY DAY.—The Caledonian having been put in complete working order will run to Sooke regularly every day. She sails this morning at 8 o'clock.