

# THE WEEKLY BRITISH COLONIST And Victoria Chronicle.

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VICTORIA, VANCOUVER ISLAND, SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 1868

NO 24

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We took occasion on the 24th of last month to direct public attention to our commercial interests as they stand affected to-day by the imposition of an average duty of 20 per cent. upon all imported goods. The article we refer to was suggested by the action taken by one of our members (the Hon. DeCosmos) in the Legislative Council, in reference to the intention of the Government upon the question of granting drawbacks upon goods taken out of bond for exportation to foreign ports. The interests involved by the present policy of the Government are so important that we deem no apology necessary for returning to the matter this morning; and we do so in hope that the present session of the Legislature will not be permitted to close without some arrangement being made beneficial to our commercial community, which it is admitted on all sides the granting of drawbacks would afford. The merits of the question, no matter from what point it may be viewed, is simply one of revenue; and the closer we keep to that view the shorter and more decisive the argument becomes. If we can show, by figures and facts, admitting of no qualification, that the direct general revenue of the country would be increased, and an indirect prosperity diffused throughout the country by the adoption of the drawback system, we cannot be accused of hostility to the Government, or of any desire to harass the Executive in the accumulated difficulties they have had lately to encounter, and thus create a dislike to anything we may say where the Government is concerned. In so many words then we may put the case thus: On the Union of the Colonies the Free Port of Victoria was abolished. We accepted the condition, because, as we have already freely admitted, it was impossible to sustain two different systems of taxation with harmony or advantage. Although imbued with Free Trade principles, as illustrated in the policy of the late Sir Robert Peel, we even went farther, acknowledged the immense good accruing to our agricultural and productive interests by the abolition of our Free Port, and that really it was of little moment to Victoria if it were never revived. But there, in justice to other important interests, we must stop and take a decided stand. By the abolition of our Free Port, our commerce has been out down to mere insignificance, our domestic capital idly locked up, and foreign capital as surely kept away, our merchants crippled in their transactions, and a dreful stagnation in all the reciprocal branches of trade created throughout the whole country. Now, no Government, we presume, can be desirous of producing such a state of things, or of continuing such a state of things, on the mere ground of revenue, by refusing to adopt a more liberal policy for the general good over the one in practice, especially when it can be shown that the latter would increase the revenue nearly fivefold. That is all the Government can desire, as well as the people and ourselves, so that really we are all working together in our respective vocations for the same good—the increase of the general revenue. In looking into this matter yesterday, we confess our astonishment (though a bad sign in a man to be astonished with anything in the nineteenth century), at the figures and facts which came to our knowledge. In the first place, we find the total importation from Eng and for

eleven months previous to Union amounted to \$2,039,850; for eleven months subsequent to Union, somewhere about \$1,500,000, showing the enormous deficit of over half-a-million of dollars. This, it is true, was in a great measure caused by the overstock of goods imported in anticipation of a Tariff; but from the facts to follow, we fear there is little hope, under the present system, of an increase, for some time to come at least, of the stock on hand is far

more goods than they can be bought at San Francisco and elsewhere. Although we cannot get the precise figures at this moment for the period we want, the exportation to San Francisco may be set down certainly at less than one half of what it was before Union, with no hope of an increase under the present system. We can, however, give the figures for the last quarter, and that may serve the purpose as well as a longer period. The value of the imports from that city for the quarter was \$180,211; and our exports thence \$9,174. The Island exports outside Victoria to San Francisco for the same period were \$65,683, including 11,000 tons of Nansimo coal, which nearly covers the whole amount. The export trade to the Sandwich Islands shows more deplorable state of things, while that to Washington Territory and Oregon is still worse. We find that our shipments to Honolulu for the year previous to Union amounted to \$89,140; since Union to only \$14,235, showing the sad reduction of nearly \$80,000 a year. The importations from Washington Territory for the last quarter amounted to \$31,186; the exportations to the same place for the same period, \$4,509. Between this port and Oregon during the quarter there were only three vessels passed, they sending two and we one; the imports standing \$1,390 against exports at \$77. A similar reduction exists in our exportations to Sitka, the last quarter showing only \$11,000, an amount bearing no comparison with any given period before Union. From these figures it is evident a great falling off in commercial transactions has taken place from some cause or other, and consequently the Government loses, indirectly far more than the 20 per cent. which the tariff yields, and therefore for the difference of that loss the present system must be held responsible. The most experienced and moderate men in the Colony attribute this reduction to being shut out of the foreign markets, where they can no longer compete on equal terms, and maintain that the system of drawbacks will restore much if not all of our former prosperity. It seems to us a reasonable proposition that with renewed commercial activity the public revenue must proportionately increase in numerous ways, and that that activity can only be had by granting the application for drawbacks. The abolition of the Free Port has protected and is encouraging our farmers; we rejoice such is the case; but it is not wise to kill our commerce to do so. That it is in a drooping condition the figures we have given prove beyond doubt. The question then comes, could it be worse with the drawback system? Commerce is the great source of revenue; increase the one and you insure the other.

From army correspondents following the Abyssinian expedition it appears the natives are a most incurious people, a virtue not very remarkable in other countries. We would naturally think curiosity alone, if not private and political interests, would prompt attention to the novel sight of a large European army, the first ever seen in the country. But they treat the English force with the oddest indifference and self-sufficiency. This probably may arise from their being educated in the belief that nothing out of Abyssinia, except, perhaps, Jerusalem, is worth looking at or knowing. Thus it may be very well for barbarians to come and study them, but for them to study the barbarians is quite a waste of time and energy. Like some other people, they are likely to have a good chance to learn better. The Shoobos, a native tribe, are quick at looting baggage animals, especially if they happen to be laden with rice or grain. When it comes to a bargain extortion is their strong game. They

appear to have an antideluvian ignorance of the value of money, for they refuse to recognize any coin below the crown and dollar; but they have no objection to give a farthing's worth of produce for that sum. That may be a convenient ignorance for them but it does not look like accident to us. The horses and mules are attacked by a new and strange disease, which is likely to cost the English people a large amount of money if it cannot be cured. The deaths of mules are past calculation.

Friday, April 17.

The last twelve months seems to have been a period of extraordinary war amongst the elements in all parts of the world except British Columbia. Our telegraphic summaries have given account, as time passed along, of earthquakes in Central America, the West India Islands, San Francisco, and a number of other places; volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, pestilence, famine and sudden death on the Continent of Europe, Australia, and almost everywhere else. Our church commands its members to pray for exemption from all these evils, so that having been an exception to the general rule, we are, perhaps, without knowing it, a righteous people. In this connexion we have a few particulars about the gale in England on 18th January last. They are taken from the changes indicated by the anemometer, an instrument to measure the weight of the atmosphere, erected on Mr. Cator's house, at Greenwich, 190 feet above the mean level of the sea. It will be seen also that on the same day the barometer indicated the hurricane; and the connexion between the two instruments, as given in the table below, is well worthy of observation: Jan. 18—Up to 7 a. m. the pressure did not exceed 30.6; per square foot; at 9 a. m. it reached 30.4; at noon it rose to 30.4; at 1:30 p. m. to 30.6; at 2:30 to 30.7; and from that time till 3 p. m. several gales were between 30.6 and 30.7; and one at 2:55 p. m. reached 30.8; after this it gradually decreased nearly to a calm, until a few minutes after midnight (0 10 a. m. 19th) when a squall of 5h. with hail and rain, occurred, simultaneously with a sudden shift of wind from S. W. to N. W. It returned to S. W. in an hour, and so continued until the early hours of the 20th. I should add that throughout the gale of the 18th the direction was steadily from S. or S. W. One word as to the barometer here on the 18th; it had fallen steadily for a day or two, and at 9 a. m. on that day read 29.645; at 11:15 a. m. 29.611; at 1:25 p. m. it had fallen to 29.307; at 1:30 to 29.296; at 1:45 to 29.282; at 2 p. m. to 29.238; at 4 p. m. to 29.176. The remarkable feature in these readings is the rate of fall—viz. at 1:30 p. m. at the rate of 0.13 p. m. per hour; at 2:45 p. m. at the rate of 0.18 p. m. per hour. Well might Mr. Cator have a pressure of 25h. at 3 p. m. On the 22d of last month, the heaviest fall of snow for thirty years occurred in New York.

WONDERFUL FEAT OF AN ACROBAT.—A New York paper says. At the Theatre Comique, the Hanlon Brothers, George William, and Alfred, and their Trans-Atlantic Combination give their admirable entertainments to good, if not always large audiences. Several new features appeared on their bill last Monday. Mr. Alfred Hanlon performs a new and original act, in which he quite eclipses his previous efforts. At an extreme height in the auditorium are placed a series of rings equi-distant, and extending the entire length of the place. After one of his most thrilling acts on the trapeze, the daring gymnast commences, head downward, the wonderful pedestrian feat of traversing the building from the gallery to the top of the stage. Slowly but surely he proceeds; to the astonishment, perhaps to the terror, of the audience. His coolness and self-possession are remarkable. He walks (head downward) from ring to ring, apparently with the same ease that he had a moment before he crossed the stage. The last ring is finally reached, and the gymnast descends to the stage; and the audience breathes freely again. This is certainly the most difficult and dangerous feat of the kind ever performed.

PROFITABLE.—An Olympia paper says the Oriflamme will receive \$25,000 for taking U. S. soldiers and munitions of war from Puget Sound to Alaska, while Capt. Finch offered to perform the service in the steamer New World for \$10,000.

SAILED.—The ship Rickwood sailed yesterday for Sydney, Australia. She is laden with lumber from Stamp's mills. One of her passengers is Mr. Musgrave W. Anderson.

THEATRICAL TROUPE COMING.—Mr. Marsh expects the theatrical troupe lately engaged by him to arrive from Portland to-day. The company come well recommended by the California press. Miss Amy Stone appears to be a very great favorite with the theatre going public. A leading San Francisco paper says of her personation of "The Cricket":—

The play of "Fanchon" had a successful run of three nights at the theatre, in this city, last week, something which, we consider, is not so much to be attributed to the intrinsic merit of the piece itself as to the natural and graceful sweetness of Miss Stone's impersonation of "The Cricket". This lady certainly possesses accomplishments as an actress that justify entitle her to rank high in public favor. Altogether free from that fierce, pretentious, straining style of art, which is so often admired and fulsomely adulated by art critics whose standard of criticism is frequently very remote from the standard of common sense, there is a refined delicacy about Miss Stone's acting which not only commands the respect but wins the positive favor of her auditors at once. Evidently a lady of cultivated mind and aesthetic tastes, she appears wholly free from the slightest tincture of egotism or ostentatious vanity, such as frequently detract greatly from the merits of really talented artists on the stage. When she makes her first appearance in the play and captures her stray chicken, every movement is in wonderful harmony with nature, and irresistibly forces the spectator to lose sight of the actress almost entirely, and look upon the representation of "the Cricket" as the real "Fanchon" herself. This power we look upon as belonging to the very highest order of art—a power which Miss Stone evidently possesses of an eminent degree. Nothing could be more naturally rendered than the "shadow dance," or more strikingly true to nature than her appeal of her grandmother, "Mother Fadet, the witch of Loire," for decent clothes. Throughout the entire play, in fact, she gave evidence of not only being familiar with the character she impersonated, but of possessing the rare faculty of truly reflecting the sentiments and sympathies which she correctly and readily comprehended. A more beautiful piece of acting we have seldom seen than that of the final triumph of "Cricket's" meekness over the excitability of "Father Barbeaud," to overcome whose stolid objections to the marriage of his son, "Landry Barbeaud," with "Fanchon" was a task somewhat difficult to accomplish. Aside from her charming personal appearance on the stage, Miss Stone possesses a fine voice, speaks with admirable distinctness, and is in all respects one of those beautiful and gifted little women that are more frequently found about than belonging to the theatrical profession. The object of an actress is to gain popularity; and Miss Stone has signally succeeded in this respect thus far in this city.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—A meeting of this body was held yesterday. Remarks were made by the members indicative of their thorough dissatisfaction at the extraordinary and hostile attitude of the Government toward the Island Free Schools, and its evident aim to crush the institution by tacitly refusing to pay over the funds voted by the Council last year for educational purposes. A proposition to resign in a body and throw the responsibility where it belongs—upon the shoulders of the Government—was discussed, and the following resolution finally passed without a dissentient voice:—

"That in view of the hostility of the Government toward the Free School System, and the continued withholding of the funds voted for the support of the schools by the last Legislature, the Chairman be requested to call a meeting at an early day for the purpose of considering the propriety of resigning as members of the Board of Education, and that each member be notified specially as to the object of such meeting."

THE PATENT SLIP.—The City Council have passed the resolution asking for permission to create a debt of \$35,000 to build a patent slip in the harbor of Victoria. The step is a wise one. There can be no such thing as loss, whether the city decides ultimately to run it themselves or let it out to the shipbuilders. Perhaps the wisest course would be for the city to hold the slip and allow the shipbuilders the free use of it in repairing vessels—the city receiving a rent at so much per day per ton for the time the ship remains on the slip—the parties using the slip to defray all the expense connected with its working. It has been said that private interests will be affected by the construction of this slip by the city; but private interests will be affected beneficially, not prejudiced by it. There is no dock in the colony at the present. Private capitalists have had ten years in which to build one. They have declined; and the Corporation at last patriotically steps forward and offers to do the work. What "private interests" will be injured by the action of the Corporation?

COWICHAM.—The farmers of this district have gone busily to work and are putting in their crops. The prospects of a great yield are very flattering.

ADDITIONAL CARIBOO NEWS.—A letter from Cariboo, dated March 25th, says that the claims below the Baldhead were then nearly all working. The Barker Co. were to commence on their drain the following week. New strikes on Mosquito Gulch and vicinity were reported every day. The claims in Red Gulch had commenced to pay. One company took \$1,000 out of four sets of timbers. The claims on Mosquito were yielding good pay. The Minnehaha divided nearly 10 oz. to each share. Rich pay has been had on Wilson Gulch, about 8 miles from Barkerville, and a little west of Mosquito Gulch. Sixty good men have gone out there. A ball was to be given on the 26th March to procure funds to build a part of the bulkhead of the drain near Cameron. A subscription list started for the same purpose yielded nearly \$1,000. A thaw had set in and the weather was fine and mild.

THE ESTIMATES are promised on Monday. To the non-arrival of the Active with despatches on the financial condition of the country, is attributed the delay. From the slow-and-easy way in which the business is being conducted at New Westminster, the session bids fair to last at least a month longer.

ON Wednesday, while the Supreme Court was in session, one of the stovepipes suddenly fell, and the room became so filled with smoke and chimney-black as to force an adjournment. What a strange anomaly to find lawyers notoriously fond of suits, fleeing incontinently to avoid soot.

THE ship Simoda, lumber laden from Burrard Inlet for China, arrived yesterday afternoon and reports the American bark Zephyr ashore off Point Roberts, near the mouth of Fraser River. The Zephyr was loaded at Burrard Inlet for San Francisco.

A PAPER DUNT is fixed for Saturday next at Craigflower Bridge. The hare will start at 2 o'clock, punctually. A large attendance is expected, as this will most probably be the last "meet" of the season.

BIG BEND.—A leader from the Big Bend crossed Kamloops and Shuswap lakes on the ice. The winter at the Bend was severe; but a thaw had set in.

COUNTY COURT.

Green vs Francis—Suit for damages for breaking a buggy standing outside the stable of plaintiff at Esquimalt. Plaintiff non-suited.

Dorman vs Miles—An action to recover \$50 damages occasioned to the plaintiff by an alleged illegal taking of a steer and converting the same to the use of the defendant. Jury found for plaintiff, \$50 and costs. Court adjourned till 5 h of May.

The Macao Gazette contains the following from Belgrade:—Everything here points to war. Within the last few days the Government have received from Hamburg some thousands of needle-guns in addition to those which were bought last year in considerable number. The equipment of the first class of the Landwehr is nearly completed. About 80,000 soldiers are to be put on a war footing. The people are enthusiastic, and several voluntary subscriptions have been made.

The Tribune, of Mobile, honest rebel, plainly advocates a Cromwellian treatment of Congress; and putting Grant and Stanton in chains; and refers exultingly to the 20,000 drilled troops of Maryland; and 2,000,000 of Northern Democrats, who can raise an army large enough to over-awe the regular army of the United States. "Marse Bob Lee," says the Tribune, "must take good care of his health. Before a twelve month is over he may be called upon to intercede for the rebel General Grant, now in arms against the Government of the United States, and in possession of Government property seized by force of arms."

The arrival of Dickens has demoralized the Bostonians. A respectable divine of that city recently appeared before his people at an evening entertainment, to read one of his peculiar productions, behind a little crimson-covered stand with a rose stuck in his buttonhole.

A TEACHER asked a bright little girl: "What country is opposite to us on the globe?" "Don't know, sir," was the answer. "Well, now," pursued the teacher, "if I were to bore a hole through the earth, and you were to go in at that end, where would you come out?" "Out of the hole, sir," replied the pupil with an air of triumph.

The last new thing in aeronautics is thus described in the patent columns of the Pall Mall Gazette.—And John Kinnerley Smythies, of Paddington, barrister-at-law, has given notice in respect of the invention of "carrying passengers through the air by a steam bird, or flying steam engine, fitted with wings flapped by the action of steam."

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PETITION FOR AD-  
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not to pay or deliver the same but  
only, the Official Assignee, whom  
has appointed.  
CHAS. E. POOLEY, Official Assignee,  
April 8, 1868.

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