

Above all the topics that have been worn threadbare by the press of Vancouver Island, the exploration of the colony certainly stands pre-eminent. For this last four years the subject has been dinned into Legislative and Executive ears, until the public has come to the conclusion that both these branches of Government have been afflicted with that incurable deafness which is said to attack those who are not disposed to hear. Whether the land speculators in the House were afraid that a proper exploration of the Island might, by unfolding a greater area of agricultural land, reduce the value of those thousands of acres held in their hands unproductive; or whether the Hudson's Bay Company had got some of their numerous traps for catching those rather valuable animals—the wild lands of the colony—hidden in the interior, we cannot say; but, certes, a most determined stand was taken to have the interior rigidly tabooed. The late Governor alluded in almost every one of his opening speeches to the desirability of having the Island explored. The estimates were sent down with an exploration item of \$3,000; but the Assembly generally managed to mix it up with the road appropriation, so that the ill-used no-productors would have high-ways or rather bye-ways that "started from nowhere, and led to no place," made through their densely crowded but sparsely populated sections of land. The Executive did not seem exceedingly enthusiastic in the matter, and perhaps was quite satisfied, if not indeed highly pleased, that no definite action was taken on the question. A small sporadic effort was made last year to penetrate a portion of the interior, but it could scarcely be called an "exploration." \$2,500 have been voted this year, but the sum is totally ineffectual to effect anything. We have now come to the sixth year of the Island's civilized existence, a period during which small men have become great, and "straw" men wealthy—but the knowledge of our small territory of 18,750 square miles, is but very little increased since Vancouver sighted the place over eighty years ago. No wonder His Excellency Governor Kennedy, a few days since, was compelled to acknowledge this condition of things to be disgraceful. We can, indeed, scarcely imagine that any population boasting of Anglo-Saxon energy and adventure could have sat quietly down in a corner of this small Island, satisfied that it had accomplished glory enough by putting up a number of brick and wooden houses on a pleasant and picturesque site. We must confess that our neighbors across the Straits would have shown more enterprise in this matter, and would have been led, if for no other object than to satisfy Yankee inquisitiveness, to explore the country, so as to calculate as well as "guess" something like an approximation of its mineral, timber, and agricultural resources.

The offer, however, which His Excellency makes, places this much neglected question on a very different footing from that which it formerly held. Exploration is no longer to be left to the tender mercies of the House of Assembly, whose members have garrotted the subject every time it came up, and by sheer force robbed it of the amount intended for its special use. No more lukewarmness is to be exhibited by the Executive on this important matter. His Excellency shows that his speeches are not to be taken as mere formalities, but that when he says a thing he means it. He desires to see the Island explored; and knowing the wretched, dawdling policy of the Assembly, he at once assumes the responsibility of applying a portion of the Crown Land revenue to that object. According to his remarks on Wednesday last, published in the *Colonist*, he is willing to co-operate with the people in this matter, and contribute a sum equal to double the amount raised by public subscription. This offer, coupled with the desire to have the scheme projected and carried out by the people, evinces a liberality of disposition, and a soundness of judgment, which the public at large will no doubt show they appreciate, by maturing a proper system of exploration at once. The season is auspicious, whether we look at it in an astronomical or business point of view, and all it requires is a free expression of public opinion on the question, that will leave no room for cavilling afterwards. This is a matter in which every man in the colony should feel interested; the public money, as well as individual contributions is involved, and any partial or confined expression of public sentiment should be earnestly deprecated.

The money required to carry out a proper scheme of exploration, will not fall far short of \$80,000. This amount would give us three exploring parties for three months, properly equipped and provisioned. The smaller expeditions can be formed consistent with efficiency the better. Large prospecting parties are both cumbersome and difficult to provide for, and have been the great mistakes in other countries. Here, of course, the risks and hardships of exploration are reduced to a minimum. There is no want of water, wherever the traveller directs his foot-

steps. There is no part of the Island in which he need be over 30 miles from the sea-coast; and game is to be found, no doubt, throughout its length and breadth. There will be no want of volunteers therefore for the expedition; but it will require a very careful and judicious selection to get hold of men qualified in every respect for the undertaking. Whether, however, the public will be able to raise sufficient funds to carry out a properly organized scheme, a few days will, no doubt, discover. In the meantime, we would urge on every property-holder in the place the necessity of contributing his utmost to a project that will more than any other undertaking give stability to the place.

A CROWN LANDS COMMISSION.

The labors of the Crown Lands Committee came yesterday to a rather sudden termination. The members in attendance numbered as usual just sufficient to form a quorum; and when one of the gentlemen left in disgust at a question put by the Chairman, the Committee was obliged to break up. Dr. Trimble decided on holding no more meetings under the circumstances; and so this Crown Land investigation from which so much was expected has collapsed in the middle of its labors. We must say we are not very sorry at this summary termination. It was quite time that a system by which witnesses could say things and unsay them with the greatest nonchalance should be discontinued. It is well known throughout Victoria that persons have been questioned by the Committee whose answers were just the reverse of the statements made to parties outside. The whole evidence, if we can call such a bundle of contradictions, equivocations and alterations, by such a name, is really of very little value in itself. No doubt every credit is due to Messrs. Trimble, Talmie and DeComos for their industry and attention to the public business. Without them we should have had no business done at all; for the other members of the committee, through some mysterious influence have remained away, leaving the whole matter at any time in the most precarious condition. While, therefore, confessing that the "evidence" is of no great value in itself, it by no means follows that the work of the Committee has been unimportant. Amidst the tangled mass of straw the needle for which the public have been so long looking has been picked up. Sufficient grounds have been produced to justify the appointment of more important Commission. The oft-handled statements of witnesses, who evidently felt but little responsibility before the Land Committee, are not exactly the testimony the importance of the subject demands. In a matter involving ultimately, probably a very large portion of the land of the colony, the mere assertions of interested persons are clearly unsuited to the exigencies of the case. It is the first important occasion on which the public have had an opportunity of bringing up the misdeeds of the past. The gigantic schemes of land spoliation which have been carried out with such unblinking hardihood, have come up for the first time in a manner, however indefinite, before a public body. It is therefore necessary to deal with the question in an earnest spirit, carrying our investigations into the dark and crooked recesses of a wily and hitherto successful public foe.

The Chairman of the Crown Lands Committee will at once we believe, make his report to the Assembly. This report, if it shows anything, must clearly make it necessary to the House to have a Commission, with oath administering powers, appointed to probe this Crown Land evil to its very base. It is the only course for the House to pursue, unless some of the members think it necessary to curb the inquiring spirit of the inhabitants, by concluding that the people have had sufficient peeps into the closets of the Island Blue Beard. We can scarcely fancy, however, that any weighty opposition would arise in the House against a recommendation to His Excellency for the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry. We shall never arrive at the truth otherwise, and the whole labors of the past seven months will be to a great extent thrown away. Were it not for the expense and loss of time, a Royal Commission should be applied for at once, for we believe in no other way will we be able to obtain a number of men sufficiently capable, honest, and disinterested to conduct the necessary investigations in a thoroughly successful issue. But every day is of the most vital importance, and however inefficient any Colonial Commission may possibly be we are afraid the experiment must be tried. A recommendation must be made to His Excellency by the House to do that which should have been done at the outset, appoint a regular Commission with the necessary powers. Had the Downing street Colonial Office shown a trace of that ability displayed in every other Department of State, a Commission from England would long since have been appointed, and this vexed question settled to the satisfaction of the colonists. But the crop of "Barnacles" seem to flourish just as well in the murky atmosphere of London, as in the more serene climate of Vancouver Island, and that well-bred but by no means pliant body called the Vancouver Island public is left to work out its own salvation from aristocratic indolence and a more than Indian cunning.

The Falkland Island Romance.

An Extraordinary Statement—Piracy in the olden time—Wealth untold concealed in a Vault—The Recent Efforts to find it.

Our readers will remember the accounts published at different times in the *San Francisco* papers, and copied by the *Colonist*, of the efforts made to discover an enormous hoard of hidden treasure, supposed to have been concealed by pirates on one of the Falkland Islands; also an additional statement in this paper a few weeks ago, when the bark *Frances Palmer* was in this port, of the second expedition in search of the buried wealth. The following statement by the principal in the affair, which came into our hands from the parties concerned while in this city, will show the public the grounds on which the treasure-seekers build their hopes. We may add that the statement was shown last fall to Col. Moody, who was Governor of the Falkland Islands at the time mentioned, and was corroborated by him in so far as he was concerned, and also as regarded *Janssen*, who was known to him as a porter about the Government buildings, and as having always plenty of money, which rumor attributed to the fruits of former piracy. The narrative is replete with romance and startling incidents, sufficient to afford material for a highly interesting novel, and we commend it to the perusal of our readers:

Statement of Joseph Wegener, a native of Denmark, formerly residing at the Falkland Islands.

In or about the year 1823-3 one Johnson, or Jansen, a Dane, commonly called Pirate Johnson, died at Port Stanley, in the Falkland Islands, and on his death bed, disclosed to Joseph Wegener, also a Dane, with whom he had been residing, and had become intimately acquainted, the following particulars, assuring him that the facts were not known to a living soul except himself, and adding, as his dying request, that as he was about to direct his friend to the certain means of obtaining an independence for life, Wegener must faithfully promise that his daughter, Jane Jansen (then single, and residing at Port Stanley), should share equally with himself and the companions he might take with him, the benefit they might derive from the information he would furnish. This assurance was given, and Jansen then proceeded to state: That on a certain spot on one of the Falkland Islands (the position of which he described accurately to Wegener), there existed a large stone vault, very securely constructed, and built in such a position as to defy detection; that this vault contained an immense amount of treasure, consisting for the most part of silver bars, packed in boxes containing six bars each. These bars he represented as bearing the Spanish Crown mark, the boxes being arranged in tiers, and the treasure so full of them that they could not be moved without first removing the upper tier from the vault, and that some of the lower tiers contained boxes varying in appearance from those above them, but what the contents of these boxes were he was unable to say; he believed them to contain either precious metal or costly gems, and that he still retained or could easily find the vault and report to the shareholders in San Francisco, when a vessel will at once be dispatched to remove the treasure. The party have been gone now some four months, and their report is daily looked for. We shall endeavor, as soon as possible, to place before our readers the development of this strange and interesting story.

PRESENTATION OF A TESTIMONIAL TO MR ROBERT DUNSMUIR AT NANAIMO.

NANAIMO, 20th April, 1864.
EDITOR BRITISH COLONIST.—The miners of Nanaimo entertained Mr. R. Dunsmuir and family at a public tea meeting, held in the Institute last night. The meeting was made public, I understand, to allow an opportunity to many who were anxious to participate in and witness the ceremony of presenting a testimonial to the respected guest. An excellent spread of "creature comfort" was provided by some of the good ladies of Nanaimo, to which full justice was done. Not the least amusing of the part of the performance was the admittance of about forty children, who were permitted to clear the tables of the remnants left by those who partook of the "first course." This they did with a relish as keen as their appetites appeared to be.

The tables having been removed Mr. John Meakin took the chair and in an amusing manner declared his inability to fulfill the post assigned him by his fellow workmen. He remarked that he was "a no-spoken man," and hoped the audience would "please excuse him." He said he had been requested to present to Mr. Dunsmuir the testimonial subscribed by the men employed at Douglas Pit, as a token of the great respect they entertained for their late overseer. He regretted being unable to speak as he would wish to do, and then formally presented the testimonial, which consisted of a beautiful gold watch and chain, on which was engraved the following inscription:

"Presented to Robert Dunsmuir by the miners of Nanaimo as a token of respect."

Mr. Dunsmuir rose and spoke in substance somewhat as follows:

Mr. Chairman ladies and gentlemen, I am quite at a loss to express to you my feelings at the present moment, and my thanks for the valuable testimonial you have so kindly presented to me this evening. Valuable as the testimonial is—it is not its value I speak of—but the value it has in proving your good feelings towards me, and which has created in me feelings and thoughts that can never be effaced from my memory. When I was a young man I anticipated this kind of a testimonial, but I had gained so much of your respect as exhibited towards me this evening, and of which I feel justly proud. Had I been leaving this place altogether, I should have felt just as though leaving my native home. But I hope I shall remain many years among you, and still retain your goodwill as a neighbor. I am very thankful to you for this token of respect; and indeed to all present here

endeavor to organize a party to embark direct for the spot, but he has never since carried out his intention. He further adds, that he is so perfectly satisfied of the existence of treasure within the vault, that he is now ready and willing in conjunction with his two companions and partners, John Harrell, an American, and John McMillan, a Canadian, to repair, at their own expense, to the Falkland Islands, and point out to any person or persons deputized by the British Government, the vault in question, upon condition that he is guaranteed a sufficient proportion of the value of its contents; and to show the good faith of this offer, that neither he nor his companions will require a fraction from the Government, if they fail either to indicate the vault, or to find anything of value within its walls. It may be necessary to add, that Wegener does not himself possess the means of carrying out this proposition, but will be enabled to do so by his friends and partners, Harrell and McMillan, and that, for their mutual satisfaction, and in order that they, together with the said Jane Jansen, (who, to the best of his belief, is still residing at Port Stanley) may each be assured their respective proportions of what benefit, if any, may result from the discovery, he will require the guarantee before mentioned. Lastly, Wegener declares his readiness to appear before Colonel Moody, (should the Col. Moody, now of New Westminster, B.C., be the same Colonel Moody, who he believes, was then Governor of the Island) or before Governor Douglas, or any Government officer, and verify his statement on oath, with a view to enlist, if practicable, the co-operation and assistance of this Government, that the necessary preliminaries may be arranged before he and his party enter upon so important an undertaking.

As has been previously narrated, Wegener, in company with a Cariboo trader, named Archibald, went down to San Francisco and organized a party, including some men of wealth and position, who chartered the bark *Frances Palmer*, and started, under the guidance of Wegener in search of the hidden treasure. The expedition, however, owing to circumstances which occurred on the voyage, was fruitless. Wegener quarrelled with the mate of the vessel, a tyrannical and reckless character, and being afraid that said mate had formed a scheme to seize both vessel and treasure, he absolutely refused to point out the locality of the vault. The party cruised round the Islands for some time, accompanied by Mr. Lane, the Superintendent of the Falkland Island Company, in his schooner, examining every spot at all agreeing with what the guide had allowed to escape him, but without result; and accordingly returned to San Francisco after the absence of seven months. To show, however, that he was not deceiving them, Wegener went to the cottage of Jansen's daughter, who is still living at Port Stanley, and took from under the hatch some papers containing a full and particular description of the locality of the vault. On the return of the expedition, the party being still satisfied with the truth of Wegener's story, determined to make a second attempt. A company was accordingly formed and the adventure divided into 2,500 shares of \$20 each, which were readily taken as soon as offered, as high as \$50 per share being obtained for some. The new expedition was organized in a different manner. If consists of Wegener and Archibald only, who have proceeded to the Islands by way of the Isthmus of Brazil to Montevideo, between which port, and Port Stanley, the Falkland Island Company run a line of schooners. The intention of the party are to find the vault and report to the shareholders in San Francisco, when a vessel will at once be dispatched to remove the treasure. The party have been gone now some four months, and their report is daily looked for. We shall endeavor, as soon as possible, to place before our readers the development of this strange and interesting story.

The Duke of York, a well-known Indian, Chief of the Chilian tribe, and his two squaws, Queen Victoria and Jenny Lind, were found in a state of inebriation, but becoming the dignity of their names and station, and were placed by Constable Smith, of Port Townsend, in the lock-up. On the following morning they were taken before the U.S. Commissioner; the Duke was ordered to pay a fine of \$20, and Queen Victoria and Jenny Lind were mulcted in the sum of \$10 each. The two latter paid their fines, but the Duke being unable to draw upon the Royal Exchequer, the Commissioner levied upon his effects, and a stud-horse was taken to satisfy the penalty. Constable Smith lodged the money and obtained the animal. Shortly after, however, the Constable himself was discovered by the Royal party lying near the Royal Palace in a helpless state of intoxication. Queen Victoria immediately proceeded to search his pockets (an unusual occupation it must be confessed, for royalty) and found the key of the lock-up door. She summoned the aid of her body-guard, and the officer was removed to the cell, where the key was turned upon him, and he was confined until the following morning. At ten o'clock Her Majesty empaneled a jury of six magistrates, of whom Jenny Lind was constituted fore-man, and the charge against the constable was duly investigated, the Queen officiating as judge. The proceedings of the court were then opened, something after the following fashion:

Duke (to the Royal Party)—*Klaxowah!* Take your place. Are you acquainted with the difference that holds this present question in the Court?

Victoria—*Nowitika!* Which is the constable here?

Duke—He is in the *skokum* house.

Victoria—Of a strange nature is the suit he follows. Yet in such rule, that the *Sinash* law cannot impugn him as you do proceed. The quality of *pre chuck* is not strained, it curseth him that gives and him that takes. Therefore, Smith, though Justice be thy plea, so sidest thou—that in the course of justice, none of us should see salvation; we do pray for mercy; and that same prayer doth teach us all to render the deed of mercy. I have spoke thus much to mitigate the justice of thy plea; let us proceed to judgment.

[The evidence was here gone into and submitted to the jury, who returned a verdict of "guilty!"]

Victoria—The intent and purpose of the law hath full relation to the penalty.

Jenny Lind, (Nerissa)—*Hyas klosh skokum judge!*

Victoria—Soft—no haste. He shall have nothing but the penal y, which here appeareth due—(to the Duke) a full grown state of that same man's is thine. The law allows it and the court awards it.

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Onnes—*Ay yak! klosh skokum judge!*

The court here adjourned until after the *patkatch* at Port Discovery.

Meanwhile in consequence of the fair ports retaining the key in her possession we learn that the citizens of Port Townsend had to obtain a new key to release their constable.

SPENCE'S BRIDGE.—A Cariboo correspondent of the British Columbian thus writes of the new bridge now being placed across the Thompson River:

"Mr. Spence's new bridge across the Thompson is progressing favorably, and if successful will soon take the place of the present ferry and will be a benefit to the traveling public, although the ferry is in splendid working order, and with the new boat can take on an eight ox or mule team and cross them without difficulty or danger. A large amount of speculation is going on as to the probability of a bridge standing, when tested by a rise of sixteen feet of water during the freshets of summer as about one-fifth of the breadth of the current is taken up by the piers, the supposition being that the cross currents and eddies caused by these obstructions will undermine the piers, as they are placed on a bottom composed of boulders and gravel."

PREPARATIONS FOR THE RACES.—The Spring Races are likely to be a success so far as the number of horses on the course is concerned. Yesterday afternoon some 12 racers were assembled on the Beach in preparation, taking a "constitutional" preparatory to their exertions on the 24th May.

this evening, their presence here I am sure I may also read as a kind wish towards me. Let me once again thank you sincerely, and believe me sincere, when I wish each one of you health and prosperity, (not forgetting your wives and children), in your daily toil."

Mr. Dunsmuir, it would seem, gave every satisfaction to the men under his charge during the time he superintended the mines, and he having resigned the situation, the workmen decided to present a testimonial as the best way to mark their appreciation of his conduct.

The chairman proposed "three cheers for the Queen," which were heartily given, and music—"God save the Queen," after which three cheers were given for Mr. Dunsmuir, the guest of the evening, music, "He's a jolly good fellow."

The Rev. Mr. Good and the Rev. Mr. White, each at the request, to the chairman made observations suitable to the occasion, and showered eulogiums upon the honored guest in an earnest and well-directed manner.

A change in the programme was here announced, and in a very few minutes the followers of Terpsichore were enjoying their favorite amusement. Dancing was kept up till midnight. Three cheers for the musicians closed an evening most agreeably and pleasantly spent. Yours, A NANAIMOITE.

A DANIEL COME TO JUDGMENT.

QUEEN VICTORIA, THE DUKE OF YORK, JENNY LIND, AND THE CONSTABLE OF PORT TOWNSEND.

From passengers who arrived yesterday from Puget Sound we gather that an incident occasioning considerable amusement occurred on Thursday week at Port Townsend.

The Duke of York, a well-known Indian, Chief of the Chilian tribe, and his two squaws, Queen Victoria and Jenny Lind, were found in a state of inebriation, but becoming the dignity of their names and station, and were placed by Constable Smith, of Port Townsend, in the lock-up. On the following morning they were taken before the U.S. Commissioner; the Duke was ordered to pay a fine of \$20, and Queen Victoria and Jenny Lind were mulcted in the sum of \$10 each. The two latter paid their fines, but the Duke being unable to draw upon the Royal Exchequer, the Commissioner levied upon his effects, and a stud-horse was taken to satisfy the penalty. Constable Smith lodged the money and obtained the animal. Shortly after, however, the Constable himself was discovered by the Royal party lying near the Royal Palace in a helpless state of intoxication. Queen Victoria immediately proceeded to search his pockets (an unusual occupation it must be confessed, for royalty) and found the key of the lock-up door. She summoned the aid of her body-guard, and the officer was removed to the cell, where the key was turned upon him, and he was confined until the following morning. At ten o'clock Her Majesty empaneled a jury of six magistrates, of whom Jenny Lind was constituted fore-man, and the charge against the constable was duly investigated, the Queen officiating as judge. The proceedings of the court were then opened, something after the following fashion:

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OUR JURY SYSTEM.

Now that the criminal cases of Assize are disposed of, it may be glanced at some of the obstacles present Jury system places before Justice. It has been, from dictum drawn up by our present General to the last criminal case, source of complaint, that juries in Island do not as a general rule perform duty. Prisoner after prisoner made up for trial; the prosecution may duct; the defence by no means the Judge may have reason to favorably towards the person at the general understanding of the case may point unmistakably to the Jury with probably some notion of philanthropy will prisoner. It is no use to blink fact. Crime in Vancouver Island immunity scarcely known, even during the days which produced the Committee. That our criminal not been excessive is owing in no terror to evil-doers which the law ministered inspires. In less order, the leniency which is here a criminal, would in very little time and property of very uncertain manner, may continue to treat crime in manner, with the same impunity, opposition for a time may induce flag; but we shall find it a question of but a few short years, unrelenting arm of outraged one case as much as in the other its retributive strokes. An injured is an injury to society, acquitted, leaving out the moral precise every man's property in a murderer allowed to go at large, material as well as moral atmosphere drives virtue to seek shelter in the of animal strength. The law, come the guardian of the public, our individual sacrifice of liberty, when we cannot obtain firmament security for our lives, would it be to go back to Rouse a state of nature, than to put up with a me of civilization without its protection.

It is not often a judge expresses dissatisfaction with the verdict of a jury, therefore, distinctly and declares that he cannot at all finding, we may conclude that to say the least, rather a strange Wednesday last, Judge Cameron called upon, in the case of *Regina v. Jones*, to express his dissent from of the jury. As our readers are well acquainted with the details it is scarcely necessary to do glance at its principal points, another an opprobrious epithet, a castigation. A little time, second scuffle ensues, in which party on the former occasion is pendent. After receiving this verdict, ultimately proves fatal, the man under the pain, seizes a bar and strikes the person who thus life. This is really the sum of the case. What we want out more especially in the the fallacious and dangerous toward by the counsel for the prosecution on our part is the more the fact of the jury agreeing with the arguments advanced, "Mr. Ring gave the jury that if a man brought himself, language into a fight, and was so that he might think his life he had a right to get rid of his stabbing him to death. If this, convey Island justice we shall importation of rowdies who would much better here than at Idaho have a habit of dealing rather with the gentlemen of the law. On the same principle of logic highwayman be justified in killing a farmer who was disposed to resent of "your money" by pretending the robber's head. But the ev attempted to show that the p he used the knife, was in of his life whatever. He feet and could have easily escape. So that the whole ply comes down to this—If a fight of his own creating gets at stab his antagonist to death, at jury will send him back again innocent and much ill used man.

In no other British Colony, we to say, could such a verdict as that of *Dougherty*, have been rendered, because no other colonial population heterogeneous a characteristic, in Victoria, however, not only cities which nationality but the community is split up at least, of fragmentary social members would find sometimes great struggle to sacrifice one to the demands of justice. In its verdict of twelve men, a difficult matter indeed to obtain