

The Weekly British Colonist and Chronicle.

Tuesday, February 25, 1868.

English and American capitalists are about to undertake the construction of a ship canal from Georgian Bay, at the head of Lake Huron, to Toronto, the chief Canadian port on Lake Ontario. The length of the canal will be between 80 and 95 miles. It will bisect what is known as the mountain system or backbone of Canada, which traverses the Province of Ontario from east to west, about midway between the Georgian Bay and Toronto. By means of this canal, vessels may load at Chicago, and sailing through Lake Michigan, cross the head of Lake Huron to Georgian Bay, whence they will float through the canal to Toronto, thence through Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence river to the Atlantic Ocean, a distance of 2385 miles. At the present time, vessels of small burthen only are sent to sea from Chicago and Canadian ports west of Lake Ontario, and the route by which they sail is long, tedious, and tortuous, and lies across the shallowest and most dangerous of the lakes (Erie), and through Welland Canal to Ontario. By the Toronto and Georgian Canal, the largest class of ships afloat will pass from Lake Ontario to Lake Huron, thus avoiding "Lake Erie" and saving, in addition, between 300 and 400 miles of sailing. The beneficial effects that the opening of this new route will exert upon the commerce of Canada and the great Western States can scarcely be estimated. Chicago is popularly called the "Granary of the West." It is into the lap of that favored city that the productions of the Great West are poured, and it is therefore of the highest importance that a ready outlet for her agricultural wealth should be secured at least six months in the year; while it is also of equal importance to Canada that the mineral and agricultural wealth that abound along the shores of Lakes Huron and Superior and in the teeming valleys of the Saskatchewan and Red River, should have expeditious and certain transit through British waters to the sea. Nor is this all. The opening of the Georgian Canal will place Toronto in communication with the chain of lakes in the northwest territory, (which has just been annexed to the Dominion) at the head of which the great overland "wagon road" shortly to extend to the Pacific will commence. Let any person examine a map of the country and he will immediately perceive the important influence the completion of this enterprise will exert upon the future of this Colony. No great public work can be inaugurated east of the mountains without British Columbia directly or indirectly deriving some advantage from it. We look, therefore, upon the construction of the Georgian Ship Canal as another stride westward of the Confederacy—as another link in the chain that is destined ere long to unite under one Government the whole of British North America from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. The estimated cost of the work is \$84,000,000, and the projectors only await a grant from the Canadian Government to commence operations. The country through which it is proposed to construct the canal was surveyed several years ago, but owing to want of unanimity between Upper and Lower Canada it could not be carried out. Confederation has since healed the differences between the Provinces, and this work, with many others of public utility, will soon be pushed forward to completion.

In our telegraphic news yesterday we published one of those silly things done by American Legislatures at times, which, sadly damages their reputation in the world and destroys much of their respect to which, for numberless reasons, they are justly entitled. It appears a Mr. Mizner, of the California Legislature, introduced a concurrent resolution (that is having the approbation of both branches) opposing the connection of British Columbia with Canada, and expressing an opinion that the Colony should be the property of the United States. Mr. Mizner is known in California, we believe, as belonging to that aggressive element which has brought America into such disrepute among other nations. The present motion is not likely to create any very friendly feelings among us. It is not only wrong, but impertinent. Suppose we were to say the Central Pacific Railroad will be an advantage to California, and an injury to us, and our Council, therefore, should pass a resolution that the work must be suspended until we got our road done. What would the Americans say of such gross absurdity? This locality, as Mizner terms it, was in possession of our country some centuries before America had an inch of land on the Pacific, and will remain in our possession, we think, after they retire from it. If original possession gives a title, we could claim all the adjacent American Territories. We are only now beginning to understand the value and wealth of our possessions on the Pacific, and it would be well for the Americans to understand at once and forever that there is not, and never will be, as things look with them just now, enough of money in the Federal Treasury to buy the "locality" they slander and abuse, so much and yet so much correct.

**Supreme Court.** Tuesday, Feb. 18. (Before His Lordship Chief Justice Neidham.) In Probate. In the matter of Isaac Hamphrey, deceased, an Intestate, and in the matter of the application of Allen Francis, Esq., U. S. Consul, for Letters of Administration to the Estate and Effects of Deceased. Mr. Wood, instructed by Mr. Coppard, appeared for the Official Administrator. Mr. Walker appeared on behalf of the Crown. Mr. Ring, instructed by Mr. Peakes, appeared on behalf of the U. S. Consul. The arguments in this matter were resumed before His Lordship, the Chief Justice. Mr. Walker read a three-foresh affidavits which had been filed since last hearing, and argued that the evidence which had been adduced on the part of the Crown and Official Administrator, fully made out the fact that deceased had fixed his domicile in this Colony, but if any further evidence were necessary he would refer to the affidavit of Mr. Francis, the U. S. Consul, who on the 6th day of December last deposed that he believed deceased had no intention of quitting this Colony. Mr. Wood stated that he had nothing further to add to the arguments already advanced by him on behalf of his client.

**Grand Jury.** On Wednesday evening a grand instrumental and vocal concert will take place at the Theatre, where Miss Lizzie Keenan, Mr. George Edwards, Mr. Gunther, Herr Reigels, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Bushell and Mr. Palmer will appear. The success that attended the previous entertainment has encouraged the performers to again appear before the public. The programme is varied and new, and as the prices are fixed at 50 and 25 cents, we expect to see full houses. A Dead Horse has been lying on the road opposite Mr. Tolman's residence for several days. It is said it started to death, and that after it died some good-hearted soul brought an armful of hay and put it under his nose. The obituary was well meant, but it came rather late. The carcass presented a very unattractive appearance, having been torn by dogs. Where's Joseph? Has he got cold in his head?

**Central America.** By the steamer Montana we (S. F. Times) have date of the Panama, Star, and Herald of the 18th January, from which we extract the following items: NIAGARA.—A destructive fire occurred in Greytown on the 24th of November, which destroyed the store of Arman & Co. and four other houses. The loss is estimated at \$40,000, no insurance. The fire is believed to have been the work of an incendiary, and a reward of \$1,000 has been offered for his arrest. The Panama states that the Transit Company has concluded a new contract with the Nicaraguan government. This statement is contradicted by the Official Gazette. The latter paper says the Company made propositions to the government to amend the contract of 1853, but nothing more; no action had been taken in the matter. HONDURAS.—The cholera is said to be committing ravages in the neighborhood of Choluteca, a new base camp on GUATEMALA.—The coffee crops, as was expected, is large prices range from \$9 to \$10 per quintal. Great fears are entertained for the cochineal crop on account of recent heavy showers. The material for the construction of a telegraph from San Jose to the capital had arrived safely and is carefully stored in Guatemala city.

**Reply from Victoria.** Editor Colonist:—My third letter was in the hands of the printer when Mr DeCosmos' first communication appeared, and would, if space had allowed, have been published at the same time. [This statement is quite correct.—Ed. Spectator.] This will account for the fact of there being no allusion in it to Mr DeCosmos' observations, on the other hand, it is quite possible I should not have taken any notice of a communication employing such objectionable terms; and, indeed, I do not see that I am in any way called upon to answer any objections he may make. The difference between Mr DeCosmos' and myself upon a particular point seems to be this—that while he believes the British North American Act would give (in case of Confederation) a certain portion of the present revenues of the colony to the Provincial Legislature, I am inclined to think that it does not do so, but that the reservation would have to be a matter of special agreement, expressed among the other matters, in the address (to be made in future) agreed upon by the Legislature of British Columbia and the Parliament of Canada, to be presented to the Queen for ratification. Mr DeCosmos states that he has proved my opinion to be erroneous. That, however, is his own idea, and he ought to be satisfied. Let the people judge by themselves as to the benefits or injuries likely to accrue therefrom. Mr DeCosmos ought to be thankful for having had such a good opportunity offered of explaining himself on his views. It must, however, be remembered that I do not hang my objections to Confederation upon this question of the division of the revenues of the colony. It is probable, however, that the people will have time to think and determine whether they will ally themselves to a country so rich that a Stamp Tax actually yields at the rate of two and a half cents per head, and its greatest objection is the inconsequence of that price, because the Canadian paper suggests that British Columbia must wait a year or two, as it will take that time to remove various practical difficulties in the way of Confederation. I have not time at present to write more, but may shortly return to the subject of the overland road, &c, and in the meantime suggest that Mr DeCosmos may be mistaken as to the personality of ed.

**Contribution to Central School.** Editor British Colonist:—Yesterday afternoon I was very agreeably surprised to observe a coal wagon back up to the Central School door and discharge half a ton of coals into our empty coal-bin. On making enquiries I found it to be a contribution from Mr C. B. Young in aid of the School, to whom I beg leave to tender my best thanks. I am also under obligations to the Spring Ridges Water Company, who, through their Secretary (Mr Neustadt) are supplying us with water gratis. No objection will be raised if other friends of popular education should do so, and do likewise. JOHN JESSOP, Teacher of ed.

**Novel Water.** We learn that two gentlemen of this city have been matched to climb the flag-staff in front of Wells, Fargo & Co's office, for \$100 a side. Both gentlemen possessed of much flesh and good-lidded stomachs, and the object of the match is to decide which can climb from the ground to the top of the staff in the shortest time. St. Patrick's Day (11th proximo) has been fixed for the interesting contest.

**The Nanaimo Coal Company** have purchased at San Francisco three large ships, which they will employ in the coal trade. By saving the heavy freight now paid, the Company hope to sell coal at a less price than heretofore at San Francisco and drive the inferior article out of that market. On the night of the 1st inst., San Francisco and Valencia (Ireland) were connected by wire and dispatch sent direct from one office to the other. The telegrams may be said to have been received in "less than no time" and the dispatch that left Valencia at 6:54 A.M. on February 1st, reached San Francisco at 10:40 P.M. on the 31st January. Wonderful!

**Capt. Egerton,** of the schooner "Alaska," lately from Victoria and now at San Francisco, has been dangerously stabbed in the breast by a drunken sailor.

**ONE OF THE EFFECTS OF CONFEDERATION.** The Nova Scotia loan was negotiated at par, in one day by Baring Bros. & Co. for \$225,000.

The brig Robert Owen sailed on the 19th January for Victoria from Honolulu, S. F. The ship Shooting Star was towed into Nanaimo on Sunday by the launch.

**Our Canadian Letter.** (From our own correspondents.) The House of Commons was opened on the 6th November last, at Ottawa, with much pomp and ceremony. Accompanied by a brilliant staff and attended by his body-guard, His Excellency the Governor-General of the Dominion of Canada proceeded through the streets, which were lined with troops, regular and volunteer. The speech from the throne, was congratulatory and touched lightly upon a few subjects which would be likely to engage the attention of the House. Shortly before Christmas the House adjourned until after the holidays. The session, or rather part of a session just held, has necessarily been provisional in its character. The most significant feature of it has been the adoption of an address to Her Majesty on the subject of the acquisition of the Northwest Territory. Many able and eloquent speeches were made on this question, amongst which we may mention that of Mr Tupper and Mr Bove against Mr. Tupper's speech was enthusiastically applauded. He pointed out the advantages which will be sure to accrue to the Dominion on the acquisition of this vast fertile region, which now groans under the wretched mismanagement of that enemy to progress, the Hudson Bay Company. Mr. Howe's chief point in opposition was that Canada is too large and thinly populated, to think of presenting an extended frontiers. So far the Government has been supported by an overwhelming majority. The Parliament of Ontario was opened at Toronto on the 25th ult., and adjourned at 2 o'clock on the morning of the 31st. The debate on the address, in answer to the speech from the throne, was characterized by considerable ability and much good temper. The House meets again to-day. The weather during the fall, was unusually hot and the farmers all over the country have suffered greatly from want of rain. During the months of October and November and part of December not one inch of rain fell, and the consequence was that people had to carry water for themselves and stock a distance of 8 or 10 miles. About the 15th ult. it commenced to freeze and we had fine clear weather; but just before Christmas a thaw set in, and that day was ushered in with a perfect storm of rain. New Year's Day brought snow and now we have good sleighing—the first of the season! The crops this year have not tinned out as well as could have been wished, barley and oats averaging only from 8 to 12 bushels to the acre. In addition to this, the failure of the Commercial Bank and of Messrs. Buchanan, Hope & Co., E. W. Gates & Co. and Brown, Gillespie & Co. three of the leading firms in this city, has contributed to the stagnation of business, which, I am sorry to say, at present exists. Much sorrow and sympathy has been felt for all the above-named firms, who, notwithstanding their failure, have preserved their reputation unscathed.

The death of the Hon Mr Ferguson Blair, which took place at Ottawa on the 30th ult., has caused a feeling of gloom among political circles in the capital. Several curling matches have already taken place, first among which was the match between the Ayr and Dundas Clubs, for the silver medal presented by the Royal Canadian Club of Scotland, and which was won by Dundas. The skating rink also are in good order and are nightly crowded with the "figure and fashion" of the city.

VARY SANSFAY.—As a proof that the deeds of men, whether of good or evil, will follow them, we can state that in the cases of two flag-officers, who, as new candidates for employment, the manner in which they conducted themselves as captains has been brought forward as a reason for their rejection of their applications. It is argued and as far as we can see very properly, that an officer has had better have a punishment list, and that after all his ships have been put out of commission in anything but a reputable order, he is not likely to have a squadron or a detachment in an efficient state. And, again, it is advanced, and here also we cannot differ from the conclusion—that if a captain has incurred an unreasonable disposition to find fault and be quarrelsome, and, moreover, has brought officers to a court-martial and has signally failed in more instances than one to substantiate his charges, it is desirable for the good of the public service he should remain on half-pay and make way for gentlemen who have maintained a character during their professional career; for judgment, strict impartiality, courtesy and firmness.—Army and Navy Gazette.

WHAT ARE THE WILD WAVES SAYING?—We went to the Cliff House on a stormy Sunday, and stood upon the rock overlooking the water and looked at the long rollers coming in from the West, and dashing against the foot of the cliff, retiring scolding and boiling as if in rage at their defeat. To our left the great Sabbath breakers rolled in upon the beach with a continuous roar.

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