

Semi-Weekly British Colonist

Wednesday, November 3 1869

Now or Never

British Columbia is rapidly drifting into Confederation willy nilly; and the colonists are for the most part asleep in the bottom of the boat. Lord Granville wants to get it off his hands as quietly and quickly as is conformable with decorum, in order that he may be free to repeat the experiment elsewhere. Sir John A. McDonald wants to acquire this indispensable key to the Dominion as speedily and upon as favorable terms as may be at all compatible with common decency. As things look now he bids fair to have it at his own price—to put the key quietly in his breeches pocket without having any unpleasant questions to answer. No blame to Lord Granville. No blame to Sir John. But all blame to the colonists who sleep at the time when, of all others, they should be up and doing. Are the people going to make terms? or are they willing to leave the whole matter in official hands? This is a question that demands an immediate reply. Are the people willing to go into Confederation without terms? Are they prepared to accept union if it comes to us sans an overland railway, sans a free port, sans an immigration scheme, sans a line of ocean steamers, sans a representative form of government, sans everything? If so, their conduct is in strict harmony with their creed. For our part, we are disposed to make no such uncalculated sacrifice. Uncalled for, because we firmly believe that if the colonists would only unite in time, and firmly ask for terms they would get everything in reason. There can be no doubt on this point. Of course the Home Government would much prefer to hand us over without being called upon to "go bail" for a Canadian Pacific Railway loan; but she is prepared to do that, if necessary, in order to get us quietly and decently off her hands. Of course the Canadian Government would prefer to take us in first, and then do for us after. It would be so much more convenient. But if we go the right way about it, in the right time, we can get most favorable terms. We know there are weak-kneed, croaking souls amongst us who say we cannot have this and we cannot have that; but will the colonists, as a whole, be content to leave their destiny in such hands? We are now going into a union, not as a mere expedient, but for life—for better, for worse, in sickness and in health, till death us do part. No divorce court will open its door to us; there will be no way of escape, once in, always in. Such being the case, should not every colonist be alive to the importance of re-considering the time, and employing every means to render the union a happy and mutually beneficial one? To fail to do this is to exhibit a degree of stupidity for a parallel to which we look in vain. We do not indulge in what some may regard as gloomy forebodings, because we look upon Confederation with doubt. Properly entered it should be an immediate and enduring good. Wrongly and bunglingly entered it may prove the reverse. But we point out these possible rocks and quicksands in order that they may be avoided. It may be said, in reply to all this, "Have you not told us that the Governor has been instructed to ascertain the views and wishes of the people? Why not wait till invited to speak? The subject is one regarding which there should be no pseudo-delicacy." The long withheld dispatch is now before us, and we scan its various paragraphs in vain for a single reassuring word on this point. There is in it nothing to indicate what course is intended to be pursued. Suppose, for the sake of argument, the Legislature should shortly be convened, and invited to vote upon this subject. The official members would join the elected ones in a vote for negotiating terms. Then, suppose the work of conducting the negotiations should be placed entirely in the hands of the Executive,—as is rather more than intimated in the dispatch,—and that they should be carried through to completion without an opportunity being afforded to the public of being heard in their own behalf. We do not mean to say that all this will really take place; but we do mean to assert that it lies quite within the range of possibility; nay, for our own part, we deem it highly probable. Would the Colonists be satisfied to blindly accept the situation? This match-making by proxy—are they content with it? If they are, let them sleep on, and take their rest. It will be time enough to be awakened by results! Time enough for the people to arouse themselves to action when they see that such a course has been adopted! Time enough to shut the stable door after the horse has been stolen!

That Dispatch

How do you like it? Had Lord Granville's pen stopped with the completion of the ninth paragraph we would have experienced less unrest. It is scarcely necessary to say that nothing in it takes us in the least by surprise, as constant readers of this journal will readily understand. The policy of the Imperial Government and the destiny of British Columbia have been so sealed book, save to such persons as refused to see. The sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth clauses are deserving of careful study, embodying, as they do, the pith of all that could be said in a whole volume in favour of the great principle of consolidation now going on. But the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth sections we read with feelings somewhat mixed. Anxious to take the most favorable view, and see nothing in the dispatch inconsistent with an honest desire to do the best for this the youngest and weakest member of the British American family, we cannot but discover germs of possible trouble carefully concealed in diplomatic phraseology. This is, as we are all painfully conscious, a Crown Colony. The colonists will, in a measure, be dealt with as miners, so to speak. The Governor will really stand in the position of agent or representative of the Imperial Government, as he is; and there is danger, as we have elsewhere hinted, that negotiations so conducted may be carried on more in the light of Imperial than Colonial interests. We must be allowed to speak plainly. Governor Musgrave we take to be an able and honorable man; and nothing could be further from our intention than to suspect him of betraying the interests of British Columbia. But it cannot be concealed that His Excellency will conceive his first duty to be to the Imperial Government. Some only are apt to think, for the specific purposes of this colony in the Dominion, he will have best fulfilled his mission when he has conserved Home interests. But the chief object of alarm is to be found in the latter part of the concluding paragraph. "I think it necessary," writes his lordship, "however, to observe that the constitution of British Columbia will oblige the Governor to enter personally upon many questions, as the condition of Indian tribes, and the future position of Government servants, with which, in the case of a negotiated treaty, two responsible Governments would not be bound to concern himself." Without any need necessarily to agitate the public mind, we fancy we discover the positioning of public officials cropping up above. It may not be so. The suspicion may, after all, only be the result of over-sensitiveness; yet it will be better to err on the safe side. We are bound to state most distinctly, that any proposition to divert any considerable portion of our revenue to such a purpose would meet with general and decided opposition from one end of the Colony to the other. What! Point upon the Colony for life a segment of officials who have been deemed the title of the body politic ever since its inception? NEVER. As we have said, such may not be the intention; but forwarded, for immediate consideration, the best of our people, we would not be surprised to find that the public meetings he called at once. Let Victoria strike the key-note—let the rest of the Colony follow. Let the valley of the Fraser, and be echoed back from the foot-hills of the Rocky Mountains. Let the people state their terms, and never hold their peace!

From Queen Charlotte Island and the N.W. Coast

The H B Co's steamer Otter, Capt Lewis, arrived at 8 o'clock yesterday morning from Queen Charlotte Island and the N.W. Coast of the Colony. She brought down seven passengers and a quantity of furs. The news from the coast since the completion of the tramway to be shipped. The tramway had been delayed by wet weather. Three explosions had taken place in the mine since the tramway was put in working with naked lights instead of safety lamps. Three of the men were buried—two badly—about the face. The mine subsequently struck work and went aboard the Otter in a body, demanding to be taken to Victoria; the demand was refused and the miners struck a canoe and started for Victoria. Following is the memorandum of the Otter, kindly furnished by Mr Smith, parser, of Victoria. Sir Otter left Victoria Oct 5 and arrived at Queen Charlotte Island on the 14th, calling at all the intermediate ports. Found on arrival that three successive explosions had occurred in the Queen Charlotte Coal Co's mine, three men being burnt about the face, and that the miners had struck in consequence. They all came on board and demanded passage to Victoria, which was refused them. Mr Robinson's report of the occurrence is that it was entirely through negligence of the part of the men. The roadway from the mine is progressing slowly, the weather having been very wet. Arrived at Fort Simpson on 17th and despatched a canoe to Fort Tongass with the U.S. mail; found all well and expecting the U.S. steamer Newbern daily, but have not heard of her whereabouts. The U.S. S. S. cutter Lincoln had recently left Tongass, she having come expressly for the Shika to examine some goods landed for the Newbern. Received U.S. mail and left Fort Simpson Oct 21st; called at Metlakatlah on the same day. M. Duncan coming off in a canoe with his letters. Arrived at Bella Bella and there heard that all the miners, except two, from Queen Charlotte coal mine had left in a canoe for Victoria, passing Bella Bella on the 20th; called at Bella Bella and on the night of Oct 25th picked up in Fitzhugh Sound two men named Newell and Fisher, who had been wrecked off Sable Island, Q.O. Sound. Called at Fort Rupert; passed the steamer Constantine on the night of the 26th off Salmon river; called at Comox and arrived at Nanaimo on the 28th, and left for Victoria on the 29th. On the way up called at Cortes Island, Dawson's whaling station, and landed a quantity of oil casks.

A Distinguished Convert to Confederation Principles

The Bishop of Columbia has delivered an address at Yarmouth on the position and prospects of British America. The Bishop is very sanguine as to the results of Confederation: He believes that there is no desire on the part of the North American citizens to separate from Great Britain.

Burned Inlet

A man named Chapman died suddenly on Thursday night last at the logging camp of Mr J. Rogers. A post-mortem examination took place yesterday, by Dr Black, the Coroner, when it was found that the main artery had burst; there was no blood in the heart. A verdict was returned of "Died by the visitation of God."

The Mayoralty

It has been reported that Mayor Trimble will not be a candidate at the forthcoming election. His Worship desires us to state that he has no intention of withdrawing from the canvass. A requisition to Mr. Macdonald is in circulation.

Rich Corral

A splendid lot of peacock ore, which will average from 70 to 80 per cent, was brought down on the Otter for Mr. Leveau. The lode is situated on Knight's Canal.

Gold Quartz

Mr. Moss yesterday brought from Bella Bella a lot of gold-bearing quartz. Specimens from the same lode were assayed in this city last spring and yielded handsomely.

Metropolitan Mission

The handsome new church at Sumas will be dedicated by Rev. Mr. Ross. Rev. Mr. Brown arrived from New Westminster yesterday to officiate here in Mr. Ross' absence.

The bark 'Alpaca'

The bark 'Alpaca' would sail about the 5th October for London for Victoria. A great deal of merchandise has been shut out by Government stores for Equatorial station; but another vessel will go off once on the berth.

The bark 'Rival'

The bark 'Rival' arrived from San Francisco yesterday in 26 days. She is consigned to Millard & Beady.

The sloop 'Minnie'

The sloop 'Minnie' was boarded by Indians in Queen Charlotte Island and many articles stolen.

Another rotten Life Insurance Company

has 'dove' in London with heavy liabilities. Dawson & Co's whaling party have got two more whales.

Oil

Dawson & Co's whaling party have got two more whales.

A Glance at British Columbia

I must at the outset disclaim all ideas of performing my self-imposed task either with credit to myself, or with satisfaction to my readers. My pen invariably halts, when its speed is most needed, and a constant struggle between thought and expression greatly adds to my difficulties. On the present occasion I envy Mr. Hopworth Dixou and Sir Charles Dicks the possession of those descriptive powers and talents which their respective works, "America" and "Greater Britain," undoubtedly display. The flight of genius exhibited in the latter work must be admitted for the past, present and future of British Columbia are there boldly sketched, though the writer never saw the Colony, save, perhaps, on his alleles.

me that a still fiercer from the largest 'Rocky' or most improved 'Armstrong' placed in position, would fill miles of the water of the Straits. The blue-books presented few features of interest, yet the brilliant style and happy periods of the dispatches from the Governor of the Colony rendered its pages attractive. My information gathered from private sources was as possible more accurate. A namesake ex-Director of English factory, who had visited Cariboo in 1862, advised me not to trust mine shafts. A visit to British Columbia, where black hills, fertile plains and an inhospitable climate, with their attendant hardships, would immediately beat my path. 'Invent' said he, 'in Washby stocks, I thought 'Gould & Curry' and 'doubled' my money in two months.' 'It is unnecessary to say that such a thing 'feet' have fallen to the ruin of thousands! By way of fortifying me upon the nature of Cariboo mining, and I was treated to a 'lesson' upon 'staves, boxes and riffles, wash-travel' and 'boulders, ground-shaking and pot-holes.' 'If you bottom a shaft and find the bed rock protruding into the adjoining claim, give up work at once; put your back to your back and take down the country. Although I didn't fully understand the advice, I was forced to look wise and promise compliance. The farming interests of the Colony were as quietly disposed of, as he assured me that agriculture had to 'vainly' struggled for its foothold. The picture thus drawn was indeed gloomy, and relieved as it was by a single feature of success: 'If the ardor of adventure unpleasantly cooled, and my purpose somewhat shaken.' Fortunately, however, I met with some of the 'friends of this colony' in London. They advised me to discard from my mind all that my friend had told me, and merely to regard his story as that of a disappointed gold-hunter, mere, on fact, the worst exercise than skill in the use of the pick and shovel. The soil, I was informed, was productive, the climate unsurpassed, farming and stock raising remunerative, and minerals abundant. I was promised moderate success, with a fair prospect of enriching myself, provided that I avoided the reckless extravagance and wild speculations, which had hitherto been a ruinous characteristic of the settlers. Much valuable information was, as I am now persuaded, then given me. I determined however, to adopt what I considered a safe course—visit Canada and if dissatisfied make San Francisco a geographical centre for future action. There I could decide either to stay, turn back or pass on. Pursuing this plan I arrived in due time at San Francisco, where I shall leave the reader for the present. The main object of this letter is to point out the difficulties which the immigrant must encounter at the very threshold of his departure for this colony; the utter want of correct information respecting it, and the comparative indifference of the governing classes of England, to the interests of this portion of the empire. The sum of my information, presented three alternatives—First farming, which from the high price of labor would consume my investment without a promise of return; next stock raising, which required more capital than I possessed; and lastly gold mining in mountains where it rains all year except when it snows. Such were the vague ideas, and notions, and mistaken opinions then formed by me of this colony, and I am ashamed to say that they were largely shared by many other Englishmen better informed than myself.

On the subject of the Tunnel

The following from the London Builder suggests some rather difficult points on the subject of work looking with a sort of amused surprise at the rose-colored statements which from time to time appear in the public journals as to the Channel Tunnel. They do not say that such a work is impossible, they do not say that it is a distinct opinion on that head; but they are very well contented with the applicability of the proverb, 'jeu ne va pas la chandelle.' It is proposed, as caution is always desirable in engineering matters, that a drift-way should first be run under the channel, in the first instance, to prepare the way for the tunnel. The suggestion is at once economical, prudent, and practical. Let us suppose a drift-way to be run some five or six feet high and wide. Is it to be timbered, or arched, or lined with iron? As the meeting from the two ends would be a thing forbidden by the calculus of probability, it will have to be worked from one extremity to the other end of the Channel. As we get on—say beyond the twentieth mile—how will the miners be sent in to their daily work; how supplied with air, or with materials; how will be excavated chalk be sent back to land? Galleries of chalk are infested, as miners are well aware, with choke-damp. What would be the quantity of choke-damp that would extend from 200,000 superficial yards of chalk surface [when the drift-way had advanced only twenty miles] and how would it be withdrawn? Water infiltrates through chalk. A very small head of water will cause infiltration for a considerable distance. Where bands of flint occur, they act like layers of sponges. All the wells in Stroud, within a considerable distance of the Thames and Medway Channels, were rendered salt by infiltration through the chalk when the brackish water of the Medway was admitted into the canal, and the company had to pay, and did pay, heavy damages in consequence. What would be the infiltration through the grey chalk due to the pressure of the water of the Channel? What would be the difference between the exudation from the 200,000 yards of surface at high tide and at low tide? How would the water on the most modest estimate of its rate of infiltration, which, by the way, would increase as the level of the sea rose? A few of these practical questions must be answered before we can undertake to speak with any idea of serious investigation as to the prospects of the Channel Tunnel.

Wrong Again

Colonist.—Before the colony left for England with a flag-pole was sent to England I arranged with the be delivered to the (at the port where the (ago) free of all charges, to do with the matter. How, strange.

Napoleon Cabinet Chamber

We find the following paragraph from the New York World—a leading American journal. The Statesman, a leading London paper, has complimented the Napoleon Cabinet Chamber as deserved, as all who have imbibed the wine can testify. "It will no doubt, gratifying intelligence to lovers of good wine that the grape crop of this year in the Champagne district of France is of good quality, though small. It is much more pleasant to have 'Reims' stare you in the face than panic." At Delmonico's the Napoleon Cabinet brand has now the lead in it. The name of the old and well-known house of Messrs. Bonome, Fils & Co., at Mareuil-sur-Ay, as manufacturers of this wine, is a guarantee of its purity and quality; and it is not necessary to add that it is a favorite brand with the Emperor Napoleon and now a leading wine at the principal Courts of Europe. Messrs. Grelley & Bierre are the only agents in British Columbia for the wine of Messrs. Bonome, Fils & Co.

Father Hyacinthe

Father Hyacinthe of Paris, whose apostasy from the Catholic Church was announced by ocean telegraph recently, was born at Orleans in 1827; was ordained a priest in 1839, and became Professor of Theology at the Seminary of Nantes. Afterward he entered the Order of Carmelites, and preached at Lyons, Bordeaux and Penzance, in the south of France, finally coming in 1864 to Paris, where he has ever since been famous for his eloquence. His repudiation of the supremacy of the Holy See, and of the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome, has no important significance in itself; but if he should announce his intention to lodge others to take the same step, he may become a greater power in the religious world than he was before.

The Royal Insurance Company

We publish on another page a statement of the securities wherein the funds of this great company are invested. It will be observed that the statement is of the most flattering character and the securities of the most unexceptional kind. It is only a few days ago that the Royal—which is managed on the mutual principle—divided a large profit among its policy-holders, many of whom are residents of this Colony. We invite the careful attention of the provident among us to the statement.

Rewards for Murderers

No reward has yet made its appearance for the apprehension of the murderer of Baker. The Government seems strangely apathetic where human life is involved. About two years ago a well-to-do miner, named Smith, was decoyed from his house in this city to Esquimaux, and murdered in the bush. He left a certificate of deposit for \$1000 in his room, which passed into the hands of the Government. No reward was ever offered for the perpetrators of this deed. Other instances where the same apathy has been observed might be cited; but these two will suffice to show how cheaply human life has come to be held in a British Colony.

England's Commerce in Danger

Ten days ago the Pacific mail steamship landed at San Francisco 1000 tons of newport coal that had left China and Japan only 32 days before. This coal was placed in freight trains and reached New York City three days ago—having been only thirty-nine days on the passage. A cargo leaving China and Japan at the same time, by way of the Red Sea and Suez, would require 60 days to reach London and 10 days more to get to New York. The Suez will therefore be supplied in 21 days in advance of London. The Pacific Railroad, then, has outdone the Red Sea and Suez. The United States from England, and the process will soon be repeated with other lines of road and other steamers to make New York City what London is now—the commercial centre of the world. Nothing short of a Canadian Pacific Railroad will save Great Britain from decay.

The Grand Business

It is announced that a general order will shortly permit the British soldier in every branch of the service to wear a beard if he can raise one. Heretofore, rigorously enough, the soldiers have been allowed to wear beards in India and have been compelled to shave in Canada, while more singularly still, cavalrymen anywhere might be full-bearded, though they were always expected to make a clean sweep in the field.

Change

It will be observed by reference to the advertisement that the entertainment to be given on Thursday evening for the benefit of St. John's School, is to take place in the Theatre, instead of, as previously announced, in a building on Fort street. This change has been made in consequence of a suspicion that the building in which it was first intended to be held might not be quite safe, and would, perhaps, be less comfortable than the Theatre.

Cruelty to Lunatics

The Mainland Guardian publishes a statement that the lunatics at the New Westminster goal have been harshly treated. The report is to be believed.