

DAWSON MERCHANT'S VIEWS

Regarding Mining Laws and Existing Conditions.

Suggests a Mass Meeting of Canadians, in Which Officers Will Be Asked to Participate.

(From Friday's Daily.)

Editor Daily Nugget: In your issue of this date, February 15th, I note that at a meeting of the Dawson Board of Trade the report of the committee on mines and mining was the sole topic of discussion, and that one of the principal features of the report was the matter of royalty. I also note in your issue of the same date an editorial in which the royalty question is discussed from a loyal Dawsonite's standpoint. With the recommendation of the mining committee and with your editorial bearing on the same point, I most heartily concur, as must every man who would see Dawson prosper — every person who would see business industries and property values keep up to anything near what they have been in the halcyon days of the past, from which standard I must say they are both at present very rapidly receding.

I am no a mine owner or operator, but I am a merchant and I have been engaged in business in Dawson for nearly two and a half years. I am a Canadian, of which fact I have ever been proud, but of late I have been constrained to blush for my country, or rather for my countrymen, as it is by the almost imbecile acts of the latter that business in the Yukon country has been throttled and the flow of revenue into the coffers of both the merchant and the government has been reduced fully one half within the space of a few months.

Not satisfied with retaining half the claims to itself the government must needs lay a tax on all gold produced, which tax, or royalty, is in fully one half the cases more than the operator has left as the reward for his business venture and enterprise. In many cases the miner operator would be lucky to clear above all expenses the 10 per cent royalty he is now forced to turn into the greedy maw of the government. The result of this oppression is that mining property for immediate working purposes has greatly decreased in value — in fact, is not marketable for the reason that there are no purchasers. The mines that are today being operated are being operated on a "tooth and toe nail" basis, the owner being fearful lest he expend more than will be realized at the cleanup after paying all expenses at top-notch prices, including the ten per cent donation to the government.

This condition affects the merchant and every other business man in Dawson. It causes an air of depression to hang like a pall over every pursuit in the city from the wholesaler of all needfuls down to the man who peddles hot tamales. Not content with the rigid laws governing the operation of claims after they have been located, those in power must needs legislate the prospector wholly and entirely out of business and out of the country. Where is the prospector of two years ago? Is he out in the valleys and hills looking for new mining fields, the discovery and development of which will add thousands, perhaps millions, to the wealth of the Canadian government by the alternate ten claim system? He is not. On the other hand he has packed his pick and shovel, blankets and frying pan and gone in quest of fields in which he is less restricted than in the Yukon.

This is the deplorable condition in which Dawson and the Klondike is found at present, and no steps have been or are being taken to retard the downward fall. Already the general business of Dawson, as well as that of the license issuing and recording office, has fallen off one-fourth

within the past three months as compared with that of one year ago in the same departments, and I venture the prediction based on present indications that those of us who are here in the year 1901, if any of us are left by that time, we will see less than one-fifth the business transacted, less than one-fifth the money made by the government and less than one-fifth the number of people here that we saw in the year 1899.

Now, the question is: how can matters and existing conditions be remedied? As for me, I think the desired ends may be brought about by concert of action on the part of we Canadians, and I am confident that nine in every ten of us are anxious to bring about a betterment. I am also confident that our officials will aid and assist us in the good work. I know it is not natural that office holders should openly denounce the government that has placed the pap bottle to their lips, but no denunciation is necessary. On the contrary, it is the duty of the officers who are on the ground to point out the mistakes which the government is making, which mistakes are not due to anything other than ignorance of circumstances and conditions as they exist in this country, which by the way, the majority of our lawmakers at Ottawa know as little as the average Canadian knows of the Transvaal country. My suggestion is that the representative Canadians hold a meeting (it could be properly called an emergency meeting), and ask the officials to attend. I believe there is not one of them so blind but that he sees ruin for the district at no long distance ahead on the road we are now traveling. At that meeting let a correct, accurate and detailed account of conditions as they now exist, the future discouraging prospects and the causes of their existence be clearly depicted and let every Canadian civilian, officer and what not join in signing a monster petition to our government at Ottawa to have remedied laws enacted and put in operation at the earliest possible day, that our descent down the incline on which we are now well started be slackened if not entirely stopped.

I am not an anarchist or a Boer, but a loyal subject of our queen who is here endeavoring to better my condition by honest trade and traffic. I am willing to go down, if needs be, in my country's defence, but I object to going down by means of my country's foolish, radical and arbitrary laws as I am now doing.

Mr. Editor, please excuse this encroachment on your valuable space. I could say more, but in justice to my country, my fellowman and myself I could not well say less.

DAWSON MERCHANT.

A Couple of Fights.

Yesterday Captain Fraser while crossing the river from West Dawson met two travelers starting for Nome, who were driving a dog belonging to the captain. The latter demanded its immediate return, but the stampedees refused to part with the animal. When the captain attempted forcible possession, he was resisted, but after a brief encounter the dog was secured by its rightful owner and the stampedees proceeded down the river with their two remaining animals.

This morning about 7 o'clock a lively fracas occurred in the New Dominion saloon. There were several participants, all of whom were employees of the house. No particular damage resulted, and the affair was quieted before the arrival of the police.

Judge Senkler Dead.

Gold Commissioner Senkler has received the sad news of the death of his father which occurred ten days ago at the old family home in St. Catharines, near Niagara Falls, Ontario. For many years deceased, who was a barrister of recognized ability, had served his country in the capacity of district court judge. He was widely known and generally esteemed throughout Ontario.

Carbon paper for sale at the Nugget office.

The Klondike Nugget

(DAWSON'S PIONEER PAPER)
ISSUED DAILY AND SEMI-WEEKLY.
ALLEN BROS., Publishers

BULLER'S MOVEMENTS.

It appears from the latest dispatches that Buller now contemplates a flank movement. It is difficult with the necessarily meager information at hand to form an intelligent idea of the situation. The latest war maps at hand locate the Boer lines as extending along the general line of Tugela river on the north side from its confluence with the Mnwe river to a point near where it is joined by the Mooi, a total distance of something over 70 miles. The center of the line is opposite Ladysmith at a distance of less than 10 miles from that point. Buller's line reaches from Springfield on the Tugela to the confluence of the Tugela and Bushman rivers a distance of about 40 miles. The distance between the centers of the opposing lines is given as being about 14 miles, while the flanks are no farther than five miles apart.

The significance of Buller's latest movement will be awaited with deep interest. A movement to either flank will involve the crossing of several rivers and an advance through a country almost as rugged as that which is now in front of him. The maneuver may be in the nature of a feint.

THE ROYALTY.

The royalty tax, insofar as our information extends, has not a single defender left in the Yukon unless it may be that the war like editorialist of the whilom organ is still ready to toss his hat in the air in applause of Sifton's greatest iniquity. To their credit be it said, even the government officials with few or no exceptions condemn the present royalty regulation in unmeasured terms.

How any man who has lived six months in the country and has been brought into contact with the workings of the royalty system can do otherwise is difficult to see unless he is a man whose prejudices have entirely warped his judgment and ruined his conceptions of right and equity. A tax at any rate whatsoever upon the gross output of the mines cannot be defended successfully by anyone who desires to see the country advance and become developed. Such a tax means a tax upon every day's labor, every ounce of supplies and in fact upon every dollar that is expended for any purpose whatsoever in connection with the development of the claim.

Time and again royalty has been paid into the government coffers from claims upon which the expenses of operation have been greater than the output of the ground. It is apparent to us and must be equally so to everyone who is in touch with affairs in this country that the future of the Yukon territory is hanging right now upon some alteration in the mining regulation whereby a man will be given assurance that he will have an opportunity to reap a reasonable reward from the time, labor and money he expends in taking gold from the ground in this country. A reasonable percentage taxed upon the net output of a claim would not be other than just, provided that the government would, in return, exert itself in the construction of trails and in other necessary ways advance the development of the country.

As matters stand today heavy mine owners are actually being forced out of business for the simple reason that they are compelled to operate upon such a narrow margin that the additional expense of the 10 per cent royalty entirely wipes out the profit. Every Canadian in the Yukon territory who possesses the slightest influence at Ottawa should exert that influence to secure immediate recognition of existing conditions in the territory.

The suggestion of "Dawson Merchant" which appears elsewhere in this paper is one on which our Canadian friends should at once act. A meeting should be called and a truthful statement of conditions as they exist in this district should be prepared, endorsed by the meeting and forwarded at once to Ottawa. Canadians in the Yukon have rights which their government should respect as well as those of any other section of the Dominion, and our people here should not hesitate in asking that the needs of this country be given consideration at once. Our correspondent's suggestion that the aid of the officials be asked to strengthen and dignify the petition is also a good one, and there is no doubt but that all fair minded officeholders in the district, knowing as they all must that there are breakers ahead of the ship of state in the course in which she is now sailing, will gladly lend their influence in bringing about the desired end.

By all means let "Dawson Merchant's" suggestion be acted upon.

From a perusal of Kruger's proclamation published in yesterday's Daily Nugget it would appear that the wily old Boer is making the most of the fanatical tendencies which every one agrees are a part of the Transvaal's character. When men are made to believe that in slaying or attempting to slay their fellows they are doing the Lord's work they ordinarily become tough customers to tackle. The natural qualities of the Boer for rough and ready fighting, added to the above peculiarity of which Kruger is evidently availing himself to the utmost, makes him a most formidable enemy.

The authorities at Seattle fear the introduction into that city of the plague now raging in the Hawaiian islands and portions of the Orient. A general cleanup of the city is in progress and old landmarks in the town which bear about them the traces of prehistoric filth are being renovated and treated to doses of chloride of lime and other equally drastic remedies. Seattle will be a better town as a result of this campaign of cleanliness.

The theory has been advanced that the Clayson party may have left the trail and joined a stampede on the Big Salmon river. The theory is probably the result of an imaginative freak on the part of some man who desired to spring a sensation upon reaching Skagway. Had such a stampede as suggested been in progress it would certainly have become known to the police or the Dawson newspapers long ago.

As was the case at this time last winter wood is cheaper than it was at the beginning of cold weather. Sixteen dollars a cord, which is now being quoted for wood, is about as reasonable as can be expected. The decrease in price is due to the ordinary workings of the law of supply and demand.

now laugh and show your
I had a dream about what
d have in this country. I
at luck would go against me
In fact, I have not tried
ing here for I just knew
no use. I dreamed I would
and I have not tried to
dream! I would have
of coming the very morning
I didn't want to be laughed
ed by my neighbors, so I
have been ever since living
hand to mouth fashion, but
there was no use in me
ck against fate, so I didn't
kicking. Only two nights
other dream, the first since
the country, and so plain
I actually woke up with
as to cause me to fall out
r in which I was sleeping
e of the joints. This time
told me plainly to go to
o to a point 67 steps along
rthward from an old stump
ind there and dig a hole
nd nine inches deep and
oop up almost pure gold
ough sand in it to slightly
water when I wash it. My
me I was to stay in Nome
of October and then skin
ce back to old Missouri by
g. Say, pard, if I don't
orn plowers peel their eyes
back there it will be a
you know any fellow that
O. K., and if he will put
for the trip to Nome, I
im in with me on my
on the beach, 67 steps
p. Let me t y a pipeful
B. Ah, thanks."

AS YOU GO

ay..

TO TRADE WITH US

Pay..

at You Right and You
ll Come Again

P.Co.

ewis & Slaver Co.

SEATTLE, WASH.
ry of all Descriptions, Pump
Specialty. Orders Taken
ly Spring Delivery
nce, Gen. Agt.
Room 15 A. C. Building

Tukey
FREIGHTERS

Leave Every Week for
Island, Selwyn
Intermediate Points.
Contracted for Both

Corral, 2nd & 5th Ave. S.

St. Michael Dawson

Transportation Co.
pire Line
PORTATION & STORAGE
Chisholm.....
Dawson Agents.
Office, 607 First Ave.