

### WHAT LONDON THINKS OF ROYALTY

#### The Chamber of Mines Scores the Yukon Mining Regulations.

Representatives of the Mines of the Empire Contend for Amelioration of the Iniquitous Conditions Prevailing Here.

The London Chamber of Mines is a powerful and representative body of men from every mining district in the empire. Their special province is to protect and foster the industry which means so much to this great commercial nation of England. Some forty Klondike companies are registered in London and naturally the Chamber of Mines has devoted much consideration to the developments here. The following important letter is from the chamber to the Canadian government:

"Sir:—We beg on behalf of the undermentioned companies registered in London, operating in the British Yukon, and also on behalf of British interests generally represented in this chamber and concerned in the development of Northwestern Canada, to call attention to the very onerous character of the mining regulations now enforced in that district. We refer more especially to the 10 per cent royalty levied on the gross output of gold and silver, and to the government lien on abandoned claims (see clauses 15, 20, 21 and 22 of the enclosed copy of the Yukon mining regulations.) The first of these matters is, however, the more urgent question at the present time. The conditions and cost of working claims in the Klondike district are such that a charge of 10 per cent on the gross yield—even after the deduction of £500 before paying the royalty—will in many cases prevent profit from being obtained in these operations. This regulation will therefore cause many claims of inferior value to be either worked in an ineffective manner—viz. in a manner simply to keep the title alive, or will occasion the total abandonment of claims of this description. There are other evil effects arising out of these prohibitive impositions, such as the many forms in which they encourage deception and law-evasion, and that they are largely instrumental in diverting desirable enterprise to the neighboring fields of Alaska to the detriment of the British Yukon and its vested interests.

There is no occasion to expatiate here upon the grievous effect of clause 16 referring to the government reservation of alternate claims, and clause 29 referring to the drastic conditions upon which claims are deemed abandoned. We rely upon your own good sense of the restrictions which these conditions place upon investing enterprises to give these matters your prompt attention.

"It is not necessary for us to dwell upon the injurious effects of these measures and the consequences to which it is universally considered they will lead. It is sufficient to say that these results would be at variance with the general welfare of Canada, while they will discourage investors in Canadian enterprises resident in the United Kingdom, and will greatly hinder the action of persons who are seeking to promote the resources of Canada.

"On these grounds we beg to bring these grievances before you, with the request that such steps may be taken in order to secure early relief, as under the circumstances may seem to you to be right and proper.

"A copy of the regulations governing placer mining in the Yukon is enclosed with those clauses marked to which chief exception is taken."

#### Quickest On Record.

The full police reports of the mail which left here December 15th are now in and the most phenomenal time on record is shown to have been made. Starting from here on the 15th it was at Skaguay and aboard a steamer for Seattle in exactly ten days, a "feat on feet" which has never before been equalled in this country. Of course, everything must have been favorable or it could not have been done. However, thirty-mile was open, requiring a whole day to get past, or still quicker time would have been made. Last winter the trip took all the way from 27 to 45 days and any traveler was considered fortunate in being able to get out at all. Probably the latest record of 10 days will yet be lowered in good time. The Alaska-Yukon railroad company is declaring positively that it will reach Caribou Crossing early in the spring, which will lower the record next winter another day at least, besides overcoming that open lake which interferes with travel so much in the early season.

#### West Dawson Enterprise.

Brewer George Leon, of West Dawson, evidently has faith in his opinion that the coming season will see the population of the present village of 150 cabins greatly augmented, for he has perfected arrangements for running a cheap ferry between that place and this and conducting a hotel with popular summer resort accommodations. As a nucleus for the latter he last week purchased the large cabin built at West Dawson last summer by Miss Van Buren and Mrs. Hitchcock, which he will enlarge and fit with bar, club room and bowling alley.

#### OUTSIDE BREVITIES.

SEATTLE, Jan. 25.—Joseph Barrett, the Klondike mine owner, has just arrived from Ottawa, where he obtained an interview with Sir Wilfred Laurier. Mr. Barrett said yesterday, in describing his interview with Laurier:

"He asked me what I thought of the officials. I told him it was not the officials who were to blame for the injustice done miners, but the law. When I told him the royalty was wrong he agreed with me, but asked me how the government was to make expenses. I suggested that a tax of so much a foot be imposed on all claims. Then there could be no evasion of the tax by fraud and every miner would be equal.

"I told him there were 11,000 claims, averaging 300 feet each, which at 25

cents a foot would be \$325,000, or at 50 cents, \$1,650,000. He seemed to consider this a very good idea. If a tax of so much a foot were decided upon I proposed that the assessment be thrown off, since it is of no benefit to either the miner or the government.

"I asked him how much the government had so far received from the collection of royalty, and he estimated it at about \$400,000. The expenses of government in the Northwest territory so far had been, he said, about \$1,500,000. I then told him that the output of the Klondike had been, in round figures, \$12,000,000 or \$13,000,000, and the 10 per cent royalty, if all collected, should have been \$1,300,000. The government had received only \$400,000; where, then, was the rest of it?"

Mr. Barrett is confident from the expressions of Premier Laurier that the royalty will either be done away with entirely and a tax on claims of so much per foot substituted or else the per cent of royalty will be materially reduced. He is now awaiting anxiously, as are many others, the action of the Canadian parliament on this point.

VICTORIA, B. C., Jan. 24.—Attorney General Martin's speech last night, indicating his expectation of a disallowance of the alien exclusion law by the Dominion government, was the subject of general comment here today. He said that although the present federal government was made up of friends of his, British Columbians would submit to no dictation as to the management of local affairs. He asked for a return of the supporters of the government for the city. If the government's opponents were returned, it would be taken as an indication in the east that British Columbians were not in favor of the alien exclusion act.

The audience received the announcement well, the meeting, which was one of the largest ever held here, vociferously cheering every allusion to keeping aliens out of the gold yielding districts.

In the legislature this afternoon the alteration between Attorney General Martin and Ellison, of East Yale, came up again on the question of the leader of the opposition, if the speaker had found any precedent for dealing with it. The speaker had not, and ruled that the matter must drop unless the house wished to appoint a commission of inquiry. The matter was then dropped.

The opponents of the anti-alien law are making a vigorous fight for re-election. J. H. Turner, Richard Hall and A. E. McPhillips, nominees of the opposition, have issued an address to the electors of the Victoria city electoral district.

HONGKONG, Jan. 24.—The Filipino junta here has just issued a statement, saying that the congress at Malolos has unanimously voted annexation. The statement continues as follows:

"The purchase by the American authorities at Hongkong of a number of steam launches for river work in the Philippine islands is high handed, unnecessary and vexatious. Domiciliary visits throughout Manila are exasperating the Filipinos. Their suspicions are aroused by such actions. The dispatch of reinforcements is incompatible with peace, and the appointment of a commission is only a pretext to gain time. The American secret police is acting offensively toward the Filipinos at Hongkong, who are British subjects."

CARSON, Jan. 24.—William M. Stewart was elected United States senator today on a joint ballot, receiving nine votes in the senate and sixteen in the assembly.

OLYMPIA, Wash., Jan. 24.—Two more ballots in joint session were taken today for senator without material change. The fifteenth ballot stood: Wilson 28, Foster 25, Humes 20, Ankeny 8, and Lewis 25.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24.—The debate on the army reorganization bill opened in the house today. Practically three propositions are before the house: The house bill provides for a standing army of 100,000 men; the minority substitute increasing the standing army to 30,000

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men, and lodging with the president discretionary power to call out 50,000 volunteers for emergency service; a proposition to continue temporarily the regular army at its present war strength of 62,000 men.

SEATTLE, Jan. 25.—The Moran Bros. concern has been awarded the contract of building the flagship for the Puget Sound Tugboat company, which boat will be named "Seattle," and will be entirely of steel, 128 feet long, 14 feet 6 inches depth of hold, with engines which will carry the total cost up to \$100,000.

SEATTLE, Jan. 25.—An international race between warships is not a common occurrence, but it is understood that such a contest is to take place on the Sound to-day. The British gunboat Pheasant and the United States revenue cutters Grant and Bear are all scheduled to leave port this morning; the Englishman going to Esquimalt, the Bear to San Francisco, and the Grant for a tour of the Sound.

VICTORIA, Jan. 25.—Capt. Laughlin McLean, of the British sailing schooner Favorite, has received a valuable recognition of his services in rescuing the survivors of the schooner Jane Grey last spring. President McKinley has sent him a pair of magnificent binocular glasses, which were bestowed upon him with much ceremony.

OLYMPIA, Wash., Jan. 24.—The State of Washington Paris Exposition commission have decided today to ask for an appropriation of at least \$50,000 to properly represent the state in Paris. It is claimed that California, Montana and other Western states will appropriate as much as \$250,000 to \$350,000 each.

NEW YORK, Jan. 24.—"Mysterious" Billy Smith cleverly and successfully defeated Billy Edwards, of Australia, before the Lenox Athletic club to-night. Up to the fourteenth round the men took very few breathing spells, and when the American rushed with a hard left in the wind and a right across the jaw, he ended one of the hardest and fiercest contests that ever took place in this or any other arena.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24.—The navy department has finally decided to remove the Merrimac from the mouth of Havana harbor by means of explosives, as a much cheaper method than to raise her and restore her to usefulness.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24.—Orders have been given for the Twenty-Second regiment, regular infantry, at Fort Crook, Neb., to leave there on the 27th for San Francisco, preparatory to embarking for Manila.

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