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THE GOVERNMENT OF VANCOUVER ISLAND.

In our Saturday's issue we alluded to the growing dissatisfaction on the part of the Assembly and the public with Governor Kennedy's administration. The subject is one of too much importance to the welfare of the colony to be dismissed with the necessarily brief comments of a single newspaper article. It embraces in effect our future as well as our present well-being; for at no period in the colony's history has the necessity for good government—a result which can only come from harmonious action between the Executive and the Legislature—made itself more absolute than now. We must stand on neither trifles nor ceremony in so grave a crisis, but meet the difficulties of our political position as practical men meet the difficulties in their commercial or ordinary life. If it is well for ourselves and well for the colony that representative government on Vancouver Island should cease—that an Imperial agent should dictate what policy the country should pursue, let us by all means relinquish a right which we have been taught by British authority to believe is co-existent with taxation, and inalienable in every British subject—let us abandon representation and submit meekly to the guidance of the Colonial Office of Downing Street or of James Bay.

The object of all good government is the happiness and prosperity of the people, and it is merely a question with mankind what description of machinery is best adapted to produce this result. In most countries, fortunately or unfortunately as the case may be, this question is not left to the public to decide; the government has come into being through the right of armed force, and has been perpetuated on the profane supposition that it was inaugurated by Divine interposition. In various instances the Divine test has given way, and the people have resumed that power which had been so long usurped by the inaugurators and the inheritors of violence; but in the majority of cases, the Governments have been strong and the inhabitants ignorant; and the consequence is that either an individual or a small minority have continued to assume the right to control the destiny of their fellow creatures. From these facts a kind of aphorism is adduced—that just in proportion to the intelligence of a people will be the popular character of the Government. If the masses are ignorant as they are in Russia, the rule is bound to be despotic; if they are enlightened as they are in America, republicanism must prevail. There is even a further maxim attempted to be brought forward, and that is that a country's prosperity is mainly due to the liberal character of the Government. America having the broadest political foundation, allowing every citizen a voice in the affairs of the nation, is the most rapid in its progression; England, forming as she does as near as possible a republic to those of her subjects who come within the franchise, is next; and so on by gradations; but it is evident, however correct the fact may be, that there is a fallacy in the proposition; for the nature of the country, its climate and its position, may have in many cases as much to do with its prosperity as its laws or mode of government. One thing, however, out of all this is irrefutable, and that is that *cæteris paribus*, the people whose Government is more thoroughly based on the opinion of the governed are the happiest and most prosperous; and this rule will apply whether the population be ten thousand or ten millions.

The question that arises in Vancouver Island just now is whether the public or the Executive shall guide the legislation of the country. It is a question embracing some very nice points; for the self-love as well as the dignity of the inhabitants is at stake. If we admit the right of the Executive to shape the policy of the country, we tacitly acknowledge that the people are incompetent to manage their own affairs—a confession that is hard to force at any time from any portion of the Anglo-Saxon race. To say that Governor Kennedy and Messrs. Wood, Wakeford & Co. know the wants of the people better than the people do themselves, may be to assert a serious and incontrovertible truth. His Excellency is, we admit, a man of considerable ability, but from various gubernatorial communications to the Assembly it is very evident he is not very conversant with colonial management. No man who has had experience in the United States or in the North American colonies would ever think of suggesting the idea of paid magistrates for rural districts, or would think of asserting that capable men to fill such offices could not be found in any of the agricultural communities of Vancouver Island. It is this want of knowledge, or want of affinity with the spirit of Colonial life that mars so much Governor Kennedy's administration. The old country idea of fancying official capacity to belong exclusively to that well known heap of helplessness called the "genteel class," sticks too prominently out. As for those "constitutional advisers," Messrs. Wood and Wakeford, we may be excused for dismissing them curtly. Not naturally gifted, on the one hand, and totally inexperienced on the other, with an intense admiration for their own judgment and a kind of melancholy pity for the judgment of their neighbors, His Excellency could not have picked up more mischievous assistants or men more likely to bring his administration into disrepute.

So far, therefore, we believe the pretensions of the present Executive to legislate and govern Vancouver Island are not well founded; but to come to the right of the question it might be interesting to know on what ground these gentlemen have formed so high an idea of their mission as to frustrate the action of the people's representatives. Governor Kennedy is sent here to look after the legitimate interests of the Crown, to see that the measures of the Legislature are in accordance with the Constitution, to carry out as head of the Executive the laws of the country, and socially as well as politically to maintain the dignity of Her Majesty's representative. If His Excellency departs in any respect from these duties, or if he interferes with the desires of the people constitutionally expressed, he is to such an extent an injury both to the Crown and people. If his Legislative Council, which is virtually the Executive, tells the inhabitants of Vancouver Island they shall have no Lien Law, they shall have no Homestead Act, they shall have no reform in their franchise, it is simply violating its most sacred duties and imperilling the respect of the Crown. Through such outrages on popular right have British subjects in days gone by been obliged to leave their adopted country, and take refuge in the American Republic, where official ignorance and official superciliousness are not of such luxuriant growth. We are not too populous that we can afford to lose any portion of our citizens through such mischievous bungling. What the people of this colony want they must have, if it is within the spirit of the constitution. They have come here and invested their money and labor, and it is a matter that concerns their very daily bread that the wants of the country should be attended to. We have already said the people know these wants. They are conversant with the means of supplying them. We have a population embracing the experience of almost every country and nationality under the sun, and one that will favorably compare with any colonial community in intelligence; when His Excellency or his subordinates, therefore, fancy that representative institutions in Vancouver Island are a mistake, and that they themselves are the Heaven-born statesmen to set things to rights, we tell them seriously they are laboring under a delusion. We tell them that the people who pay the taxes and support an expensive Government are not only able to legislate but determined to submit to no interference in their legitimate efforts to benefit the country. If His Excellency wishes to regain that position in the respect of the inhabitants which he once held, he will put his own happy speeches into action, and will leave the people, who are certainly the most interested parties in the country, to carry out what their reason and experience dictate.

INTERCOLONIAL RIFLE MATCH.

The chosen ten of the Victoria Rifle Corps went up to New Westminster by the steamer Enterprise on Thursday night, accompanied by the band of the corps, arriving there at seven, a.m. The morning dreams of some of our Westminster friends were dispelled by the lively strains of martial music wafted on the breeze at such an early hour, and many a heavy slumberer yielded to the power of melody, and was drawn forth to witness a portion of the day to which he was perhaps usually a stranger.

After fortifying the inner man at the "Colonist," the bugle sounded, and the Victorians marched to the ground headed by their band. By ones and twos the Westminsters came straggling to the ground—a proceeding which, *en passant*, we must be pardoned for noticing as not quite *a la militaire*. As soon as the whole number had collected, it was decided that the Westminsters should commence the contest, and after the triggers had been tested, the cracking of rifles and pattering of bullets soon told what hard knocks the target was receiving. The five rounds having been fired off, the Victorians marched to the front, and "Brown Bess" the latest born, kept up a similar shower of lead on the target. The shooting at this distance resulted, strange to say, in a tie.

The next trial, at 200 yards, produced a few long faces amongst the Victorians, the score showing twelve points in favor of the Westminsters. The flush of partial success did not, however, seem to have its usual effect, for at the next distance, 250 yards, a great falling off was observable on the part of the Westminsters, and the result was eight in favor of the Victorians. Then came the tug of war; the last range to be fired off, and only four points' difference in the two scores. The Westminsters apparently went into the last firing, 300 yards, with greater confidence and coolness than their opponents, and made within one point of the preceding score; the Victorians on the contrary seemed to wax nervous, and became discouraged on seeing some of their best shots making a few "bushrangers." Towards the end, many seemed to grow careless, and the full moon on the target appeared to wear a derisive grin at their futile efforts. The result was known long ere the last shot was fired, for it was soon evident that the Victorians could not win. The score at this range gave the Westminsters 13 more to the good, making them the victors by 17 points.

At the conclusion [illegible] struck up "Oh, dear! what can the matter be," which brought smiles to the [illegible] many of the spectators.

The shooting on both sides was not what would be considered in these days of rifle proficiency firstrate, although some dusky sons of the forest thought it was *skokum pooh*, but as all things must have a small beginning, we hope that this trial of skill is but the forerunner of some heavier scoring, and more closely contested matches. The position taken while firing by the Westminster men, with one or two exceptions, was not at all according to the Hythe school of instruction. By numerous modern experiments it has been a well established fact that the manner in which the rifle is held, and the position taken by the rifleman materially affect the accuracy of the aim. All musketry instructors of the present day make a great point of having the left elbow straight under the rifle, and the right in a line with the shoulder, the efficiency of which is proved by raw recruits becoming under the system, good shots in a very short time.

The Victoria men labored under one or two disadvantages in the match; in the first place, the range is all up hill, so that the sights on the rifles intended for level ground would not answer; and secondly, for some of the distances the Enfield Rifle is so constructed that the sights cannot be adjusted to allow for the additional attraction, therefore it had to be done by guess. During the day the band enlivened the interludes with a variety of stirring strains, which seemed to be listened to with satisfaction by a goodly assemblage of the fair ones of the sister capital. With their usual hospitality, the Westminister corps entertained their brothers in arms with a sumptuous dinner at their drill hall. Here not a fault could be found by the most fastidious; the tables groaned with the weight of the many good things on them, which were placed on the tables in such profusion as even to astonish the sharp-set appetites of the heroes of the day.

After exercising vigorously for some time in the knife and fork drill, the usual loyal toasts were drunk, followed by the healths of Governors Kennedy and Seymour, the Press, the two Rifle corps, the Band, and last, but not least, the Ladies. Mr. Good proposed the last toast in a humorous little speech, expatiating largely on the lustre of those eyes which had acted as such strong stimulants to nerve the warrior's arm to deeds of prowess, ascribing the palm of victory to their influence. At 1 a.m. the company dispersed, all thoroughly satisfied with their day's amusement. So far as the Victoria men are concerned we are sure that all felt highly gratified with the reception given them and thoroughly enjoyed their visit, although the fates ordained that they should not bear away the laurels.

The Enterprise left New Westminster at 2:30 a.m. and arrived here at 9:30, when the result of the match was soon heralded through the town by the Band in the appropriate airs of "There's nae luck about the House," "Cheer up Sam," "There's a good time coming boys," &c.

The following is the score:—

NEW WESTMINSTER.

	150 yards.	200 yards.	
Lieut Birch	1 2 1 2 2—8	2 2 1 2 1—8	
Ensign Wolfenden	2 1 2 3 1—9	3 2 1 1 3—10	
Sergeant Claudet	1 1 1 1 1—5	0 0 0 1 1—2	
Butler	2 2 1 3 1—9	0 1 1 1 1—4	
Tilley	2 2 1 1 1—7	1 1 1 1 0—4	
Syme	2 2 1 1 1—7	1 1 1 1 2—6	
Thorne	2 1 1 2 1—7	1 1 1 1 1—5	
Brokenbrow	2 1 2 1 2—8	1 2 1 1 2—7	
Maunsell	1 2 1 2 2—8	1 2 1 1 1—6	
Franklin	2 1 1 2 1—7	1 1 1 1 2—6	
Total	75		68

	250 yards.	300 yards.	
Lieut. Birch	0 1 1 1 1—4	1 1 2 1 1—6	
Ensign Wolfenden	1 1 1 1 1—5	0 2 2 1 1—6	
Sergeant Claudet	1 0 0 0 0—1	0 1 1 1 0—3	
Butler	3 1 0 1 1—6	3 0 0 1 0—4	
Tilley	0 0 1 0 2—3	2 1 0 1 1—5	
Syme	0 0 2 1 2—5	1 0 0 0 0—1	
Thorne	0 1 1 1 2—5	1 0 3 1 1—5	
Brokenbrow	0 1 0 0 0—1	1 1 1 0 0—3	
Maunsell	1 2 1 2 0—6	0 0 2 0 1—3	
Franklin	2 0 0 0 1—3	1 1 0 0 0—2	
Total	39		33

VICTORIA.

	150 yards.	200 yards.	
Lieut Pearse	2 2 1 3 3—11	1 1 1 0 2—5	
Adjt. Vinter	1 1 2 2 0—6	2 1 2 0 0—5	
Sergt. Neustadt	2 2 1 3 3—11	1 2 0 1 1—5	
Homfray	2 1 1 1 2—7	1 2 0 0 1—5	
Hargraves	1 1 1 2 1—6	1 1 0 1 0—3	
Quincey	0 2 1 1 1—5	0 1 0 0 0—1	
Thompson	2 1 2 1 1—7	1 2 3 1 1—8	
Foreman	1 1 2 1 1—6	1 1 2 1 0—5	
Roscoe	1 3 2 1 2—9	1 1 1 0 1—4	
Newberry	0 2 2 1 2—7	2 1 0 1 1—5	
Total	75		46

	250 yards.	300 yards.	
Lieut. Pearse	1 1 2 3 0—7	0 0 2 0 0—2	
Adjt. Vinter	1 0 0 1 1—2	1 0 0 0 0—1	
Sergt. Neustadt	2 1 1 2 1—7	1 0 2 2 0—5	
Homfray	1 1 2 1 1—6	1 1 0 0 0—3	
Hargraves	2 0 0 2 1—5	2 0 1 0 0—3	
Quincey	1 1 1 0 0—3	1 0 0 0 0—1	
Thompson	2 2 1 1 1—7	2 1 1 0 2—6	
Foreman	1 1 0 1 0—3	0 0 0 0 1—1	
Roscoe	2 1 1 1 0—5	1 1 0 1 0—3	
Newberry	0 1 0 0 1—2	0 0 0 0 1—1	
Total	47		25

Grand Total.....New Westminster, 210 points
Do Victoria.....193 do
Majority for New Westminster, 17 do

No. of points made by each markaman:—

NEW WESTMINSTER—Ensign Wolfenden, 30; Lieut. Birch, 26; Butler, 23; Maunsell, 23; Thorne, 22; Tilley, 19; Syme, 19; Brokenbrow, 19; Franklin, 18; Sergt. Claudet, 11.

VICTORIA—Sergt. Neustadt, 28; Bandsman Thompson, 27; Lieut. Pearse, 25; Homfray, 21; Roscoe, 21; Hargraves, 17; Foreman, 15; Newberry, 15; Adgt. Vinter, 14; Quincey, 10.

THE SETTLERS vs. THE INDIANS.

To the Editor of the British Colonist,

Sir,—Without pretending to agree with you in everything you have written on the important and difficult question of the rights, management, &c. of our natives, it is very refreshing to me, after hearing and reading constantly hearing about in our [illegible] meetings with the Indians here and at Chemainus. I fully agree with you that we cannot expect the settlers to pen up all their animals, but their running at large should be subjected to certain regulations. There may be unlawful animals as well as unlawful fences. Should there not then be some practical law defining what shall constitute a lawful fence, and providing for the appointment of fence viewers in case of dispute on this point, where damages are claimed? I have met the Indians at their councils several times for the purpose of urging them to fence in their land, and have told them continually—sometimes to their displeasure—that they must enclose their lands or they would lose not only their crops but their lands also. But I find the great difficulty in the fact that the boundaries of what is to be their reserves are not officially fixed and distinctly marked out. The native reasons very shrewdly on this subject. He says: "The white man wishes to limit the Indian to the little patches we are now cultivating, and if we put a strong, permanent fence around the patches it will somewhat weaken our title to all that is not enclosed, and we and our children cannot do in the future as we have done in the past—use one piece of ground for a few years till it gets tired, and then work a new piece for a while and let the old piece rest." It seems to me that the great want at present is a man of perseverance, wisdom and experience to act as Colonial Indian agent, whose duty it would be to visit the natives at their homes, meet them in their councils, hear all their wants and grievances, and show them that he is their friend; and I believe that through such a medium the Government might do almost as it pleases with them or their lands. But if the Government continues to stand by and see them driven off all their lands piecemeal without having any settlement with them or giving them any equivalent, we must expect trouble.

As to the settlers, why should they not manage their own affairs as they do in the back townships of the Eastern Provinces? They are a similar people, in very similar circumstances. There I always found the system of self-government to work as well in the young settlement as in the populous district, and I do not see why a system of circuit judges, honorary justices of the peace, and a simple colonial system of municipal institutions should not answer as well here as on the other side of the Rocky Mountains. And if British America is to become at no distant day a confederated empire—as it most probably will if it is to remain *British*—would it not be well to assimilate our colonial policy from the first to that of the Eastern Provinces as much as circumstances will permit? But this is a subject upon which I must not enter, as my letter is too long already.

Yours, &c.,
E. White.

Nanaimo, June 29, 1865.

and unsuccessful [illegible] in young colonies is a grave and difficult [illegible] ject to handle skilfully, all who have considered it soberly must admit. See how the wisdom of the Colonial office, and the House of Commons—said to be the highest tribunal of wisdom and good sense in the world—is taxed to straining whenever the more difficult phases of this question come before them! Witness the recent debates on the New Zealand war! Also, how our most talented colonial governors quail before this subject, and fear to expound their Indian policy or even to express an opinion upon some of its most knotty points, and they often commend their wisdom by their silence. He who brings to his aid not only a sound judgment and much experience, but a thorough knowledge of the history of other colonies, the manner in which the natives have been treated, what part of their Indian policy has been most successful, &c., deserves most to be heard, for he is likely to speak most wisely.

The two great works from which I have derived very much satisfaction in the study of this subject,—and which I think every christian statesman who has anything to do with colonial governments cannot pursue in vain—are the volume entitled "Evidences on the Aborigines," and the late voluminous work on the extent, resources, government, &c., of all the "British Colonies," published in three large volumes and dedicated, by permission, to the Queen, by R. M. Martin, Esq., late Treasurer to the Queen at Hong Kong, &c., &c., in which a history of the management and mismanagement of natives has special prominence, and is treated in a dignified, able, and impartial manner. The former volume contains a record of the various and highly important testimony given by missionaries, travellers and others, before a large committee of the House of Commons a few years ago, appointed especially to consider the whole question of the best mode of treating aborigines. As this is a subject in which I have taken much interest, and, in addition to a good deal of reading have had considerable opportunity during the last thirty years, as a son of a pioneer settler and missionary of a pioneer society, of learning something about the character and best management of the American Indian, east and west, I shall venture to express an opinion on a few leading points.

To the question, "Should the natives be treated as subjects?" I would answer, certainly, but in a qualified sense. Our children are subjects; but who expects or wishes them to enjoy all the rights of citizenship before they attain to their majority? The true idea is to treat the Indians, in many respects at least, as a minor. It is really surprising to see a gentleman of Dr. Helmcken's ability and observation rising up in the House and telling us (as reported by the press) that "the Indian must be treated in all respects exactly as the white man." "Let them drink their own grog, and make it if they please." This wonderful stretch of liberality may do very well just while fencing potato patches and drinking liquor are the topic of conversation; but does the hon. Speaker intend to carry out his doctrine and allow natives, in their present state of civilization, to hold land in fee simple, to vote at elections, and sit on juries? It is found necessary in the eastern provinces still to treat the natives as minors, with few exceptions, although forty years ago they were equal if not superior to what ours are now; and since that period they have made great progress in enlightenment and civilization; so that our natives in their present untaught and helpless condition shall have conferred upon them all the rights and responsibilities of full-fledged citizenship, is more than any sensible man can advocate. While, however, they occupy the position of children, let them know and feel that they have in the Government a wise, kind and impartial guardian.

To the question, "Should the natives have the same privilege as the white man in regard to the use of intoxicating liquors?" If I had ten thousand voices they should all answer, No! The whole history of this question in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the Eastern Provinces, the United States, &c., answers, no! Why should not history and experience teach us? If our law-makers wish to make a wonderful exhibition of their wisdom and originality, they can suspend the prohibitory liquor law for a few months, and then I venture an opinion that they will be glad to re-enact it with more rigor than ever. But the letting in of such a flood is a dangerous experiment. We are told that the experiment was made in this very country, and among these very Indians, for many years by the Hudson Bay Company, and that the results compare favorably with the working of our present law. Who does not, sir, I ask, see a great change between their time and ours? Then there were only a few white men in the country, and these were paid regular salaries and had no need to resort to a mean traffic to make a dollar. Their liquor was much superior to the stuff now mixed up and passed off for whisky, and they only visited the camps at long intervals and stayed for a short time. The Indians for the most part remained at home, and they had only began to acquire an appetite for strong drink, while their means for obtaining it were very limited. But now, how different! Their appetite is strong, confirmed, hereditary. There are scores of depraved liquor vendors waiting to rush in and supply this appetite with the most corrupt stuff, not only for the purpose of making money, but in many instances with the distinct object of seduction and robbery, and in others, I fear, for the diabolical purpose of frustrating the efforts of christian teachers among the natives. To say that the traffic should be placed under [illegible]