THE WEEKLY BRITISH COLONIST.
And Victoria Chronicle.

VOL. 8. VICTORIA, VANCOUVER ISLAND, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1867. NO. 44

WEEKLY BRITISH COLONIST

PUBLISHED EVERY TUESDAY.

HIGGINS, LONG & CO.

TERMS:

Per Annum, in advance	$6 00
For Six Months	4 00
For Three Months	2 50
Per Week	0 25

PAYABLE INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.

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Official Denials.

Mr Seward has officially denied that he has made overtures for the purchase of British Columbia, and the Danish Government has officially proclaimed that it has not agreed to dispose of its West Indian possessions. Both rumors appear to have been written in the New York *Herald's* favorite style and to be utterly devoid of truth or probability. We doubt, even, if Mr Seward had any hand in promulgating either of the rumors. He is too sensible to manifest his anxiety to effect a purchase when he knows that that anxiety would cause an enhanced value to be placed on the property. As a proof of how well Mr Seward can keep a secret, observe the quiet manner in which the purchase of Russian America was effected. Was there a single person connected with the British Government or with the Hudson Bay Company—whose rights were directly affected by the cession—who dreamed that negotiations were going on. No. The news of the transfer fell like a thunderclap, and was as great a surprise to the Americans [illegible] Washington as it was to us here.

The fact is, if the American Government once had designs on this territory, the New York papers by the publicity they have given the scheme and the importance they attached to the coveted territory, have prevented their consummation. While, therefore, we do not for a moment believe an offer of the kind has been made, or, if made, that it would be entertained for a single moment, we cannot but deprecate the silence that the Imperial Government has preserved throughout. The American and Danish Governments have both taken steps to officially deny the rumors so far as their own interests were affected; while the Imperial Government has been content to let it go forth to the world that it has become so old and rickety as to wish to part with an important portion of its Colonial Empire; that to appease the wrath of its American cousin and settle the Alabama claims it is willing to relinquish its hold on the Pacific coast, and to show its colonies on the Atlantic how they may become an integral part of the American Republic, and by the imposition of a high prohibitive tariff cease to be customers for English goods. We complain that these ridiculous yet injurious stories have been allowed to circulate for months without a word of denial from the Imperial Government. They are thought, no doubt, to be unworthy of notice; and, as a general rule, so they are. But in this colony, we regret to say, there are many credulous persons who believe every silly *canard* they hear. They are like the old fellow who related a wonderful story, and who when taxed with exceeding the truth, said he knew it was true because he had read it in the paper! Now, we do not wish to assert that papers are habitually incorrect; but we do say that many things find their way into them that have no foundation in fact. The reported sale of British Columbia is one of these; yet there are some in our midst who as implicitly believe it to be true as though they had stood by when the bargain was made and the "forfeit money" deposited. This class, we believe, would be greatly benefitted by a denial from the Imperial Government. Their minds are unsettled, and they will "rest and be thankful" with nothing short of an official announcement by the British Government that they have been deceived.

FOUR large ships are on the way from San Francisco to load with lumber at Burrard Inlet.

The California Election.

Our American readers have great cause for gratulation in the triumph of the Constitutional Democrats in California by splendid majorities over the Radical Republican candidates. The successful gentleman—Mr Haight, of San Francisco—is well known to many of our citizens as a professional gentleman of wealth, influence and honest purpose. He was an original Republican in 1856; but fell away from that party when its leaders proved unfaithful to their pledges. Mr Gorham, the Radical candidate, though quite a young man, is a professional politician—a sort of public pensioner—one of the class who, by changing their politics to suit the popular tone, manage to fill fat offices. His opponents charge that he is steeped to the lips in corruption; and the fact that the most influential papers in the State opposed him, while the "roughs" who, in days gone by, brought discredit upon the Democratic organization, were his staunchest friends and supporters, appear to establish the charge. There was a third candidate in the field—a Mr Caleb T. Fay—put forward by those Republicans who were opposed to Mr Gorham's return on account of his bad character; but Mr Fay only drew a sufficient number of votes from Mr Gorham to increase the majority of Mr Haight. The result of the election may be accepted as an endorsement of President Johnson's policy by the people of California; and if only on that account the news must be highly gratifying to our American residents.

Monday, Sept. 9th.

NORMA.—If the large and fashionable audiences that on two occasions have greeted the appearance of the Bianchi Italian Opera Troupe at our theatre, can be accepted as an indication, it is safe to assert that our people, as a class, are highly musical in their tastes, and that they can and do appreciate real talent. Among the audience of Saturday evening we observed His Excellency the Governor and Mrs Seymour, Admiral Hastings, General Steele and Staff, and General Pitcairn, U. S. A., and most of our principal [illegible]

[illegible] Donna, Signorina Bellini, was charming, the sweet soprano of the lady telling with excellent effect on the solos, duets and trios with which the piece abounds. The solo of "*Casta Diva*," by the Signorina, was particularly fine. The trio, commencing "*Oh! di qual sei tu Vittima*," in which Signorina Bellini's Soprano, Signora Carofali's Contralto, and Signor Bianchi's Tenor, were blended, in delightful harmony, was one of the finest efforts of the evening, and drew forth rapturous marks of popular approval. In the third act, the duet, by Signora Carofali and Signor Bellini (basso), was rapturously encored; and in the fifth act, the trio, by Signorina Bellini and Signors Bellini and Bianchi, were also redemanded—the fair Prima Donna being nearly smothered beneath the many bouquets thrown upon the stage from all parts of the house. A humorous duet by Signors Bianchi and Bellini concluded the entertainment. So far as the vocal performance was concerned, the entertainment was a success, far beyond what we had even hoped. Of the orchestral accompaniment, candor compels us to say that it was far from good, and but for the efficiency and presence of mind of the vocalists, would have rendered the entertainment a partial failure.

NAVAL.—Her Majesty's steam sloop Mutine, 17 guns, Comndr. Wm. Swinburn, anchored in Panama bay on 26th July, last from the coast of Mexico. The Mutine left Acapulco on 2nd July, and brought down some $340,000 in treasure, and four French soldiers, who had been made prisoners but afterwards effected their escape and were taken on board at San Blas.....The Panama *Star* and *Herald* of 29th July says that the steam corvette Malacca had orders to relieve the steam sloop Reindeer on the Mexican coast. The latter will then proceed to Panama and take the place of the Mutine, which vessel will continue to Valparaiso..... H. M. S. Scout, for Vancouver Island, sailed on the 20th July for Panama.....It is said in British naval circles that Sir Rodney Mundy, the Admiral in command of the North American station, will shortly be promoted and succeeded in his command by Sir Sidney Dacres.

FROM SITKA.—By the arrival of the sloop Mystery, from New Archangel, we have news from Sitka to the 29th July. The U. S. Lincoln, after leaving an Inspector of Customs to look after the interests of the American Government, sailed for Onalaska, one of the Aleutian group, on the 23d July. No goods from a foreign port will be allowed to land anywhere in the country, and goods from San Francisco must be certified by the Collector of Customs and the Russian Consul there. The H. B. Co.'s steamer Otter, with a U.S. Inspector of Customs aboard, sailed on the 18th July for Chilcarthe, to settle up the company's business with the Indians there. The schooner Nor'Wester sailed for Port Townsend on the 18th July. Two Russian ships and the English schooner Major, lay in the harbor when the Mystery sailed.

DEPARTURES.—Chief Justice Needham and Mr Brew started for Cariboo at 7 o'clock on Saturday morning.

H.M.S. ALERT—This corvette, Lieutenant Commanding Brooks (of the Zealous), was 56 days from Callao Peru. In addition to Capt. Innes, invalided, Dr Davis was left in the hospital at Callao, and nearly all the officers, with the exception of the 1st Lieutenant and the Chief Engineer, have been changed or invalided since the Alert came on this side four years ago, besides changing her commander three times. Captain Knocker, R.N., who preceded the Alert to this port, took command of the vessel on Saturday. The corvette was docked at Valparaiso for repairs to her bottom.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS FOR COURTESIES—In the last number of the *California Free Odd Fellows' organ*), Bro. D. Norcross, who lately paid a visit to Victoria, returns thanks for many acts of kindness, not only to members of the Order, but to many out of the Order; to brothrrs Drummond, Holden, Hegele, and to friends McCrea and Franklin, he says he is specially indebted, as also to many others whose names he cannot recall. A private letter from T. L. Smiley, of San Francisco, to J. A. McCrea, says he was never in a place that he liked so well as Victoria, nor where he was so handsomely entertained by its citizens.

NEW WESTMINSTER ITEMS FROM THE "EXAMINER."—The *Examiner* contains a good letter from Nanaimo in favor of the Common School system and deprecating the payment of $1700 to a magistrate whose most arduous duties consist of shooting and fishing....The Government has reserved a number of acres of land at the head of Howe s Inlet for the New Westminster Copper Mining Company.....Fifteen hundred pounds of Cherry Creek silver ore are on the way to Victoria for shipment to San Francisco.

THE departure of the Chief Justice for Cariboo has already been attended with a pernicious result. On Saturday morning, a few hours after Mr Needham had gone, it was ascertained that a man who was indebted to certain merchants in the sum of $2500 was preparing to skedaddle. The Governor was applied to, but he declared that he had no power to issue a *capias* or to authorize any other person to do so, and the debtor with the money sailed in a schooner for the other side yesterday. What a delightful muddle we are getting into here!

RUMORED.—It is rumored that Judge Begbie and Commissioner Ball have been recalled by telegraph from Cariboo. It is also asserted that they will be suspended. The Judge, we suppose, for deciding that the Gold Commissioner had no jurisdiction against them. We don't know how much reliance may be placed on these rumors, but it must be evident to everybody that there is a "jolly row" brewing between certain officials and the Government.

REPRESENTATION OF BIRMINGHAM.—A friend has kindly placed in our hands a slip from the Birmingham *Daily Post*, of July 24th, from which we learn that the recent contest for the vacant seat in Parliament resulted in the return of Mr Dixon, Liberal, by a majority of 1605 over Mr Lloyd, Conservative. The contest was hot and exciting, and at the declaration of the poll Mr Lloyd charged that intimidation had been resorted to by the other side to prevent the full strength of his party being polled.

MARRIAGE IN HIGH LIFE.—The London *Morning Post* announces that a marriage is arranged and will shortly take place between Viscount Milton, M. P., eldest son of Earl Fitzwilliam, and Miss Laura Beauclerk, second daughter of the late Lord Charles Beauclerk, son of the eighth Duke of St Albans. Lord Milton, it will be remembered, visited British Columbia a few years ago.

WE understand that His Excellency the Governor has instructed Mr T. Spence to make a survey for a new line of wagon road, to run from the 150 mile post, through the fertile valley of William Lake to Soda creek, with the view of superseding the present impassable slough between that point and Deep creek, which is undergoing repairs, so as to keep it open for the emainder of the season.—*Cariboo Sentinel.*

BLACK BEAR CREEK—A private letter by yesterday's mail says that Black Bear Creek is now "showing up big." Surface diggings have been discovered at the head of the creek yielding an ounce to the hand, and several companies are at work making big wages.—*B. C. Examiner.*

THE EFFECT—Speaking of the effect of the temporizing policy of the Governor towards the Grouse Creek rioters, a correspondent of the *Examiner* says: "A general feeling of uneasiness begins to prevail here, and something must be done to prevent the recurrence of such disturbances."

THE British ship Vortigern, Capt Raymur was towed from Nanaimo to the outer harbor, on Saturday evening, by the Isabel. The Vortigern is laden with coal for San Francisco.

COMMISSIONER IN BANKRUPTCY.—Solicitor General Wood, and not Mr Pemberton, has been sworn in as Commissioner in Bankruptcy. The "swearing" was done late on Friday night before the Chief Justice.

THE statement that a bishopric of New Westminster is to be taken out of the diocese of British Columbia is repeated in the English papers.

THE steamer Alexandra, with 24 passengers and a Cariboo express and mail, arrived yesterday afternoon at 2 o'clock.

The Grouse Creek Difficulty---Miserable Cowardice of the Executive.

RICHFIELD, August 20th, 1867.

EDITORS COLONIST:—A great farce has just been enacted here, at which we might laugh, were it not likely to result in consequences disastrous both to the Colony and to individuals. His Excellency the Governor has been here, and, as he declares, has *settled* the Grouse Creek difficulty! My object in this communication is simply to say *how* he has settled it, and with what a shameful loss of respect for both parties, and still more disgraceful imputation of moral cowardice, he has fairly *run away*, afraid of the responsibility of taking any decisive action to sustain the laws.

I have watched the whole progress of the dispute between the Canadian Company and the Grouse Creek Flume Company, hitherto refraining from any comments upon it. I had hoped that the result of the Governor's action might justify our former boasts about the supremacy of the law, and although I saw great possible future evil likely to ensue from the officials here unable promptly to sustain their decisions, yet I throught that such a lesson would be given to the law-breakers in the end as would effectually prevent in future any repetition of such scenes. But, like the rest of the community, I have been disappointed, and am compelled to own that the law is at present perfectly powerless against the party that has bid it defiance.

In the commencement of the difficulty public sentiment was generally in favor of the Canadian Company. The mischievous enactment of the Legislative Council last winter, taking away the right of appeal from the decisions of the Gold Commissioner except on questions of law, was seen by all to be a most prolific course of injustice. Although it is well known that several of the most prominent members of the Canadian company were the main instrument in producing this change in the Mining Act, yet everybody desired to see them have a *chance* to assert their rights to the disputed strip of ground, and the inability of the Commissioner to grant this re-hearing, created a feeling of sympathy in their favor. When, however, the Flume company consented to a rehearing before Mr Begbie to take place within two days and afterwards offered to desist from working the ground until a rehearing took place—their refusal to accept the proposition, began to create a change in popular opinion. Their recent acts in defying entirely the power of the law, the Gold Commissioner, Mr Ball, has [illegible]

[illegible] Governor in the premises, I desire to speak.

Mr Seymour, in company with Captain Potcher and Mr Trutch, arrived at Richfield on Wednesday the 7th inst. On Thursday he had an interview with Mr Booth, the leading spirit in the Canadian company, which resulted in eight of their number appearing before Mr Ball on Friday, to answer to a charge of contempt in refusing to obey an order of the Commissioner restraining them from working upon the ground. Upon this charge they were found guilty, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. One of the number, John Grant, did not resist the sentence, but the remainder with most insulting remarks to the Gold Commissioner bid open defiance to him, and declared that "they did not come there to go to jail;" 'that if they had treated the Commissioner to more champagne, &c., they would have won their case,' and refused to accompany the officers. Mr Ball immediately proceeded to His Excellency, and informed him that the prisoners refused to obey his orders, and that he was powerless to carry them out, I am told by an eye-witness to the scene that the Governor's agitation was pitiable in the extreme, as if afraid that some personal violence would be used by the Canadians. He hurriedly asked what could be done,—seemed greatly relieved to find that they had the privilege of bailing themselves out, and finally dispatched a hasty messenger for Mr Booth. The result of the conference is unknown, except that the Governor *requested* Mr Booth to apply for a mitigation of the sentence, and armed with a promise that the period of imprisonment should be commuted to 48 hours, this gentleman succeeded in persuading the redoubtable Canadians to go through the *form* of accepting their sentence. I say *the form*, because they would not allow the doors of the jail to be locked upon them, and had free access to all the Court-house grounds during the term of their imprisonment. By all accounts, their experience of prison life must have been very agreeable, for their sympathisers supplied them bountifully with grog; what with games and songs, interspersed occasionally with a derisive hoot at the officials, they were the jolliest set of convicts ever seen. At the expiration of the 48 hours they were released, having purged themselves from the charge of contempt, and in the language of His Excellency, having allowed him to vindicate the majesty of the law! What a miserable subterfuge for the Executive of a Colony like this! When forced by his own fears to recede from the decided stand taken by his representative, unable to deceive himself, he still tries to persuade the public that the law has been respected. As if the crime of openly refusing to obey an injunction of court—working upon ground that had legally been declared not to be their own—taking out a large sum of money which may at any time be decided to be the rightful property of others—could be atoned for by a 'bogus' imprisonment of *forty-eight hours*, and that punishment only consented to on a promise that it should be of no longer duration.

But what does Her Majesty's representative do next, after this firm and decided action? Regardless of the fact that the ground is still in possession of the Canadian Company (although with a promise that it should be handed over to the Crown), having effected no settlement whatever of the dispute, knowing that the remaining portion of the Flume Company's ground has been jumped by the same band of lawless men, under the name of the Sparrowhawk Co., ignoring everything connected with the affair (to use his own language) 'except the simple strip of 12 feet 2 inches of ground'—at 7 p. m. of that evening he quietly informs a few that he shall leave the next morning, requesting 'that nothing be said of it;' and at 5 a. m. on Saturday morning he ingloriously flees from the field of battle, [illegible] in his heart less some passing treasure shall wait to hiss at the indignant hisses of an outraged community.

As might be expected this action has had its results. Since the departure of the Governor legal steps have been taken by the Flume Company to eject the Canadians who, (under the name of the Sparrowhawk Company) had seized upon the portion of their ground at first undisputed. An injunction issued from the Gold Commissioner's restraining them from working the ground, and upon a hearing before Mr Ball, Murdoch, one of the jumpers, flatly told him in open Court 'that he had worked the ground and intended to continue to do so,' any orders to the contrary notwithstanding. They continue still at work on the ground, and a warrant issued yesterday for the arrest of three of them. No one, however, imagines that they will pay the slightest attention to it, or allow themselves to be brought before the Court.

You can imagine that the long continuance of such lawless acts as these must have deprived the Canadians of all the sympathy which they possessed at first. I have heard many business men express great uneasiness as to the future. They say that the law is a farce, and there is not the slightest protection for property of any kind. In reply to the refusal of the Flume Company to accept an arbitrator, by the Governor's suggestion, that gentleman is said to have exclaimed, 'Then I must turn the Canadians loose upon you.' Instead of turning them loose upon the Flume Co. alone, he has by his action turned them loose upon the community; not a band of 'Canadians,' but of ruffians and shoulder-strikers, who will not stop when their present wants are supplied, but will continue to prey upon all men. With nothing in the law to fear or respect, what restraint can be held upon them? The lesson taught by the past history of the colony is already forgotten, and we have lost our boasted reputation of being a law-abiding people. The position [illegible] and liable to insult even in the sacred halls of justice, it would have been far better if the Governor had confined himself within the precincts of Government House, and given full authority to some person free from hi vacillation and indecision of character to come here and 'vindicate the majesty of the law.'

CRIMEA.

British Columbia.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MANCHESTER COURIER.—Sir,—You have given in the *Courier* of to-day an extract from the report of the emigration commissioner, showing what has been done in British Columbia during the past year. I should feel obliged if you would kindly permit me to offer a few further particulars, to show its desirability as a home for our surplus population. Having been officially connected with the colony from the year 1859 until the close of last year, I can speak with some degree of confidence. The climate is extremely healthy and admirably adapted to the English constitution. A gentleman, who for five years held high office in the colony, and whose family consisted of a wife and eight children, has assured me that British Columbia is far more healthy than this country; and his experience is the same as that of all who have resided there a few years. Land is abundant, and is to be obtained at the low price of 4s. 2d. per acre. Taxes upon land there are none, neither are there any poor rates, for there are no poor; a beggar would be a curiosity, I neither saw nor heard of one during my residence in British Columbia. Religion and education are not neglected, there are places of worship belonging to the various religious bodies; and public and private schools, public libraries, mechanics' institutes, &c. The land abounds in game, the rivers teem with fish; the usual retail price of venison is 2½d. per lb, and of salmon 6d. each. Coal and timber are being exported in large quantities, which might be greatly increased but for the two great wants of the country—capital and labour. If better supplied with these British Columbia would speedily advance under the wise and energetic rule of its present governor. Its mineral resources are very great, its export of gold is larger, in proportion to the number of miners employed, than either California or Australia in their palmiest days. I will not trespass further on your valuable space, but would intimate to any of your readers who may desire to know more of this truly important colony, that if they would favour me with a call I should be happy to present them with a pamphlet which I had printed a short time back for gratuitous circulation.—

Yours, &c.,
JOHN COOPER,
Local Secretary to the Provincial Union Insurance Company:
16 Cooper street, Manchester, July 12, 1867

THE ship Dublin, from Puget Sound with lumber, has reached Melbourne, Australia.

THE Isabel sailed for Burrard Inlet yesterday morning to tow down a lumber ship.

THE corner-stone of a new Israelitish synagogue, which is to cost one hundred thousand dollars, was laid at St. Louis the other day under the auspices of the Masonic order.