

The Klondike Nugget

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PETITION OF BUSINESS MEN.

From Monday and Tuesday's Daily.
On another page of this paper will be found a list of the names attached to the petition dealing with the incorporation question, which petition was presented to the Yukon council, at the meeting of that body on Thursday last. We commend this list of signatures to the consideration of the citizens of Dawson, who will find in it food for earnest reflection.

It would be difficult under any circumstances to procure a more representative list of names than those which have been signed to the anti-incorporation petition. With almost one voice the business men and property holders of the city have hastened to place themselves upon record as being opposed to the plan of incorporating Dawson at the present time. In so doing they have acted with sound judgment and have shown that they believe in the application of ordinary business principles to the management of public as well as private interests. When the affairs of a business house are handled with economy and efficiency and a reasonable profit on the investment is shown, there is ordinarily no desire on the part of the promoters for any change. The same thing is true when applied to the larger affairs of a town. Dawson is being governed in a quiet, unostentatious way, but in a manner that is giving general satisfaction. Various improvements have been made in the town from time to time until it is practically impossible to recognize any trace of the conditions which prevailed when the incorporation idea was first advanced.

The advantages which are to be gained from incorporating at the present time are not apparent. Representative government would be secured only partially. The cost of administration would necessarily be largely increased and from the standpoint of efficiency there is little reason to believe that any marked improvement would be shown. It appears from the petition and the names which are signed to it that the business men and taxpayers generally of Dawson have given careful consideration to all these points. The conclusion which they have reached is a natural and logical one and may be said without hesitation to represent the sentiment of the community at large. Incorporation at this time would be an error, the consequence of which might be serious. There is much to be lost and little to be gained by a change, and this fact in itself is sufficient to warrant the decided position which the business men have taken against the organization of a municipality.

LAST NIGHT'S MEETING.

The pro-incorporation meeting of last evening was not what might be called an extraordinary success. It is true that a temporary wave of enthusiasm spread over the meeting when the possibilities contained in the proposition to establish a municipal brewery were thoroughly realized. But when the speaker who advocated the scheme suggested that the proposed brewery would be a valuable source of revenue to the city it became evident that the beer would have to be paid for after all, and a damper was immediately cast upon the situation.

The whole meeting was permeated by a glibness in handling big figures which was really remarkable. All that Dawson needs to do, according to the able gentlemen who occupied the floor last evening, is to apply to the Dominion government for \$50,000, and to the territorial authorities for \$75,000 out of the liquor permit fund and enough money is at once on hand to start business.

Of course there would be the possibility of a hitch arising whereby these funds would not be immediately available, in which event, as one able platform financier announced, we would

proceed to borrow money on "current revenues."

Seriously regarded, the meeting of last night was not productive of a single argument in favor of incorporation. From the figures given by the strongest advocates of a municipality it was shown that the expenses would be greatly in excess of the present cost and no evidence was produced to indicate that a regularly elected local government would be more efficient than the present system.

An effort was made to show that incorporation and heavy taxation levied upon local business concerns would in some measure relieve the miner on the creeks of the burden of taxation which rests upon his shoulders. The fallacy of such an argument is plain on its face. The entire cost of maintaining the territory eventually falls upon the mining industry, which is our sole source of production.

Incorporation will not lessen the charges of territorial administration and will merely add to the present cost of conducting our affairs a sum variously estimated at \$100,000 per annum. While it is a fact that the levy for raising this amount would fall directly upon Dawson, in the end the money must be forthcoming from the man on the creek. There is no clash between the interests of Dawson and the interests of the creeks. If the affairs of the town are conducted wisely and economically, prices of commodities in Dawson are bound to be less than will be the case if excessive taxation is levied upon the town. What the miner wants is the chance to buy his goods at the lowest possible cost. That cost is high enough at the present time without adding thereto by placing heavy taxes upon Dawson. Altogether the meeting last night was a disappointment to the few people who have held to the belief that the incorporation idea possessed some merit.

THAT CUSTOM'S COLLECTOR.

Complaints continue to be made of the arbitrary actions of the United States collector of customs at the Forty-mile boundary. Instances are cited where the collector has placed excessive valuation upon goods offered for entry, and not infrequently it is stated that consular invoices properly made out and certified to in Dawson have been rejected, the collector making his own appraisements.

While it may be true, as will be noted, in an interview with Acting United States Consul Te Roller that the collector is acting within his legal rights, it certainly is not the intention of the United States government to work any unnecessary hardship upon miners in Alaska. It appears to be a case of abuse of a little brief authority, and the quickest remedy that can be secured is through direct appeal to the treasury department at Washington. The fact must not be overlooked that there are always two sides to every question and the customs collector may have reasons to advance for his actions, which have not been given to the public. However that may be, the complaints which have been made are sufficiently strong and numerous to warrant an investigation from the American authorities.

There ought to be no difficulty about the entrance of goods of American origin into Alaska when certification of such origin is properly made before the U. S. consul. The spirit of the law is to admit such goods free of customs charges, and it is the duty of officials to be guided by that spirit and not to resort to technicalities to accomplish its defeat.

There will be no scarcity of lumber in Dawson for years yet to come in spite of prophecies to the contrary. Along the Stewart and other tributary streams of the Yukon there are vast forests of good timber which have scarcely been touched. We shall have all the lumber required until we get ready to make use of brick and granite.

The mail service is showing distinct improvement all around. With the consignment of last evening letters

dated at outside points as late as December 26 were received. The mail contractors are getting back to the record of last winter which fact the Nugget hastens to assure them is duly and properly appreciated.

Owners of 90 per cent of local taxable property are opposed to incorporation. Of the remainder possibly two per cent are in favor of incorporating and the remaining eight per cent are still to be heard from. This condition ought to settle the question without any difficulty.

All the ills to which Klondike human flesh is heir will be cured by incorporation, if we can believe the promises held out. It is a good thing that the average Klondiker has a trace of the Missourian about him.

Last night's meeting developed a surprisingly large amount of chechako talent. Strange gods, according to the scriptures or some other good authority, should be followed only after very close investigation.

There were no answering cheers to the proposition that aldermen should serve without compensation. The very suggestion sent a chill over the assembly.

The only trouble with Woodworth, Clarke, etc., is that they insist upon taking themselves seriously.

Mr. Prudhomme possesses a very proper appreciation of the dignity appertaining to his position.

The News is slowly but surely going daft on the century question.

Defy Arrest.

New York, Dec. 18.—A dispatch to the Herald from Kingston, Jamaica, says:

Serious riots growing out of the race feeling took place in the streets of this city last night. The chief rioters were several hundred negro soldiers of the British West India regiment, who were supported by natives of their own color. They attacked civilians in the street and maltreated many so badly that they were taken to the hospital and are under treatment for severe injuries.

Lieut. Col. Allen, who is in command of the regiment, endeavored to control his men, but was unable to do so by persuasion. He then organized the police and swore in citizens to aid in keeping the peace.

The soldiers and petty officers have refused to surrender to the police and defy their officers. Most of them are in the military camp and the streets are guarded by the force of police and volunteers under Lieut. Col. Allen. Severe measures will be taken against the mutinous blacks.

There is great unrest in the city and vicinity and race feeling is at a high pitch. It is expected that something will precipitate riots like the former fatal outbreaks.

Meetings in the vicinity of the military barracks have been abandoned under orders from the authorities and all civilians have been warned to remain indoors until the trouble is over.

Price of Rheumatism.

New York, Dec. 18.—W. Seward Webb, as president of the Wagner Palace Car Company, is the defendant in a \$2000 damage suit now being heard in the city court before Justice Fitzsimons. George W. Birnbaum, a traveling salesman, was the plaintiff.

It appeared from the testimony that in November, 1899, Birnbaum was traveling through Texas and on the night of November 3 he went to the office of the Wagner Palace Car Company at Dallas and purchased a ticket calling for a sleeping car berth on a train going to San Antonio.

He paid \$2 for the ticket and when the train started he found that there was no sleeping car. As a result he had to spend the night sitting up in a day coach. He declared that the coach was so cold that he contracted rheumatism and he was forced to discontinue his trip through Texas.

The defense was that it was not the fault of the Wagner Company that the sleeping car was not attached to the train but the fault of the railroad company over which the sleeper was carried.

The jury failed to agree before the court adjourned, and a sealed verdict was ordered returned.

Missing Persons.

Inquiries are made for the following persons by relatives through the N. W. M. P., town station:
Joseph Gibson, of Wingham, Ontario;
Capt. Jas. Davey, Wakeford, Ontario;
Henry Shoemaker, Grass Valley, Woods county, California.

Old Phoenix Outdone Death of Mr. Griffiths

Cast down but not discouraged, rebuffed but not obliterated, Murphy Bros., the popular meat dealers are ready to respond to the call of time and on tomorrow morning will reopen the Bonanza market at the old stand in their own building on Third street from which they were unceremoniously chased by fire yesterday morning. But ere the smoke had cleared away Murphy Bros. had carpenters at work and by tomorrow morning the place will be thoroughly overhauled and ready to again become the home of the Bonanza market, which, after an interim of but 48 hours, will be reopened with as choice a stock of general market supplies, fresh and salt meats of all kinds, poultry and game, as was ever placed on sale in Dawson.

POLICE COURT NEWS.

The police court opened to a full house this morning, Magistrate Rutledge presiding. The first case called was that of George Mick vs. George Wise. George Wise had hit the afore-said Mick "on de kisser" recently in the Aurora No. 1 saloon, thereby displaying his unwisdom to the great damage of the Mick mouth. The difficulty grew out of a nuisance committed by Mick which was resented by Wise in the manner stated. Wise paid a \$2 fine rather than languish in jail seven days, which was the alternative offered by the court.

Wm. Bowman complained that last evening he had been assaulted by Charles Rithkie of the Klondike hotel, who had struck him with his fist just over the left optic, thereby knocking him into the corner. Rithkie entered a plea of not guilty, when Wm. Oleson was called by the prosecution and testified that he had seen Rithkie either strike or push the plaintiff, who fell to the floor. Bowman testified that the

plaintiff went there to collect a bill of Rithkie about a month ago, and was then threatened with dire things, and being a cripple had kept out of the way till last evening, deeming that the moon was in the proper position to insure success, and that the Rithkie wrath had had ample time to subside, he called at the hotel where he sat talking to a lady when the warlike Rithkie came in and advanced towards him. He got up as any gentleman would to say good evening, but did not stop when he had said this, but with indiscretion came at once to the point and said "How about that account," whereupon the accused had "hauled off and hit" him over the eye, causing his immediate retirement from business. Rithkie then somewhat modified his plea by the statement that he got so vexed that he just hit him once. "I didn't knock him down; I just hit him easy and I guess he laid down." "Ten dollars and cost, or a month in jail," said the judge, and after the fine had been paid all the parties drifted out into the snowstorm.

In the case heard Friday in which Albert A. Nortrup was charged with assaulting Geo. E. Ames, the defendant gave bond in the sum of \$250 for his appearance before the territorial court.

Cleveland on Democracy.

Atlanta, Ga., Dec. 17.—The Atlanta Journal this afternoon prints an interview with former President Cleveland obtained by a staff correspondent at Mr. Cleveland's home.

"In my opinion," said Mr. Cleveland, "the great need of the Democratic party is a return to first principles. The Democratic party has not been fatally disorganized, but it badly needs rehabilitation on purely Democratic lines."

"What is the matter with the party? It has, in my humble judgment, simply wandered off after strange gods. A large mass of Democratic voters saw this before the last election. They remained quiet, but when the time came to vote they said: 'This is not Democracy,' and refused to support it."

"As I see it," said Mr. Cleveland, "it is the duty of Democrats everywhere to aid in the rehabilitation of the party. There are some signs of an insistency upon the necessity of a return to Democratic doctrines in the south, but they are not so general as I would like to see."

"What of the future?" was asked. "With a sincere return to its old time doctrines," he replied, "the old time victories of the Democratic party will certainly be won."

Griffith Griffiths died at the Good Samaritan hospital at 4 o'clock this morning, and news of his death will be regretfully received by a host of friends as the gentleman was very popular, being a splendid pianist, a good story teller, always ready and willing to devote his services to the pleasure and entertainment of others, and a general social favorite.

He was employed in the gold commissioner's office where he was quartz mining recorder. He was also organist at the Presbyterian church, and took a prominent part in the entertainments given by the Free Public library. In club life he was also well known and liked, no smoker or other club event being considered complete without his presence.

Mr. Griffiths' death will be a surprise to many of his friends, as his illness has been very short, only lasting about ten days. The cause of his death was typhoid pneumonia.

Slight for Gov. Pingree.

Lansing, Mich., Dec. 18.—Gov. Pingree's banquet, which was announced in honor of the members of the state legislature, justices of the supreme court and railroad officials of the state, was given in the hall of the house of representatives. None of the justices of the supreme court nor the railroad officials invited were present, while only three state senators and 46 representatives attended. Not one of the state's officials-elect accepted Gov. Pingree's invitation to be present. The menu was elaborate and the list was long.

Bill Nye on Life Insurance.

Almost a year previous to the death of America's great humorist, William Edgar Nye, and while he no doubt believed he had before him a long list of years to live, he wrote the following on the subject of life insurance. He evidently told the truth, in part, at least, as he carried policies on his life amounting to upwards of \$40,000, which his family received after his death:

Life insurance is a great thing. I would not be without it. As a means of longevity it is equal to the French duel. My own health is greatly improved since I got my nice new policy, with my name beautifully underscored with red ink.

Formerly I used to have a seal-brown taste in my mouth in the morning. My mouth tasted like the dead past. I also had that tired feeling, hot flushes, ringing in the ears, a constant desire to evade work, gnawing sensations at the base of the chest, horror of industry, etc.

But all that has passed away. I am more hopeful and even my hair looks more hopeful. I would not try to keep house without life insurance.

My wife at first objected seriously to an insurance on my life, and said she would never touch a dollar of the money if I died, but after I had been ill a few months and my disposition had suffered a good deal, she said I need not delay the obsequies on that account.

In these days, however, of dynamite and swift-changing presidential administrations, and dark tunnels through which an engineer goes groping his way at 25 miles per hour; these days of tumbling signs of the times, and tipy telegraph poles, live wires and dead repeaters, these days when the politician and the deadly bridge policeman with his pull, lie down together (under the influence of the same stimulant), these days when death lurks in the air we breathe, the earth we tread, the food we eat, the water—the water we breathe in, the—I say it behooves us to look well to our insurance and our future state, and I take pleasure in certifying and saying to whom these presents may come, that since I became fully insured, my health has improved so much that it is a subject of profound congratulation on my own part, and the deepest disgust, on the part of those who would naturally inherit my vast wealth.

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