

The Weekly Colonist.

Tuesday, August 23, 1864.

THE ALARMING CRISIS.

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sages of the event, the "boldest" of us "held his breath for a time." To-day, however, we announce the satisfactory intelligence that the "country is safe," and that we may all again exercise the normal functions of our respiratory organs. There is danger from neither external nor internal foes. That society organized at Puget Sound, of fourteen men and two boys, for the capture of Vancouver Island has, we rejoice to say, refrained from putting its design into execution; and we have it on the reliable authority of King Freery, that there is no immediate danger of an Indian revolt. So far so good. But why have the people been thrown for the last few days into such a whirlpool of anxiety, fear, and consternation? It is the old story of the panic. The raw and undisciplined troops get frightened by some exaggerated conception of danger, the alarm spreads, and in a little while a whole army breaks and runs, without the remotest idea of the why or the wherefore. Those three hundred and thirty-seven miners who took out licenses on Leech river have terrified the Government—frightened it out of its "five senses." Unnerved to the sight of several hundred rough-looking men seriously and persistently rocking cradles—it gives the alarm in incoherent and breathless syllables—the infection spreads—and the whole community, although ignorant of the true cause, shares in the trepidation. The speech of the Governor, however, on Saturday, has happily restored the population to their former equanimity. All our unfounded fears are at once dispelled, and the inhabitants begin now, so near do extremes meet, to laugh at the whole occurrence.

In all this absurdity there is, however, a serious aspect. The dignity of the Government has been trifled with. Injurious advice or gross misstatements have been poured into His Excellency's ear by enemies to the country and the constitution. The Governor has been told that the colony is redolent of seventy-three dollar nuggets—that in a few weeks the place will be overrun with a hundred thousand savages from California; who do not speak the English language—that bowie-knives and revolvers will be the most common mining implements on the diggings—that one magistrate will be required to every ten of the population—that, in fact, the whole country will become a scene of lawlessness and bloodshed. The Governor, being a prudent man, does not wish so heavy a responsibility thrown upon his hands, and so, after trying official and unofficial advisers to his heart's content, weighing them in the balance and finding them wanting—he turns as a *derrière resort* to the wisdom of the Assembly. Dispatch becomes the order of the day, and constitutional precedents, being inconvenient at so dangerous a crisis in the country's history, are summarily dispensed with. To-day the House meets with an indistinct idea that it has no business meeting—that it is not a legal body, in consequence of its being called together without timely notice. It meets, however, for all that; but we cannot vouch for the continuance of its sittings; and so the probability is that His Excellency's injudicious advisers have brought on something like a collision between the Legislative and Executive.

When we say that there was no earthly necessity for this sudden requisition upon the labors of the Assembly, we only express the opinion of every thinking person in the community. The idea of calling upon the members of the House to make laws for the miners is going back to the early period, when men working on the diggings were supposed to be ignorant laborers, whose knowledge was confined to the use of the pick and shovel. Since those days of trouble, especially in Australia, Mining Boards have been established—both legislative and judicial—and there is now no class of men exercising the privileges of self-government to a greater extent than the Australian gold diggers. The advantage of giving the miners this privilege is to have a code of regulations or laws that will meet emergencies as they arise. On the other hand the House of Assembly would make matters ten times worse than they are now, by giving a fixity to laws that might require perhaps immediate and repeated alteration. The responsibility which His Excellency dreads in this matter, is, we think, very much exaggerated. He has simply, before giving his sanction to any regulation of the miners, to see that it benefits the many instead of the few. The great idea, however, of the Government in this sudden convening seems to be to induce the House of Assembly to swallow the civil list bill well coated with Leech river gold, and take the Crown lands from the custody of the Exec-

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LATER FROM SOOKE.

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Very few of the miners will now return and the country will be thoroughly prospected.

Mr. J. Fotheringham arrived yesterday overland from Sooke. He states that matters were satisfactory on Leech river and the miners were actively engaged in preparing their sluice boxes, but the fire, which had been raging all round had greatly impeded operations. The camps had to be frequently shifted as the wind changed.

A serious accident occurred on Tuesday night; a party of miners were encamped on the left bank of the river about a mile up when a cedar tree fell across the stream from the opposite bank; one of the party seeing the tree falling got behind another tree, but a branch struck the side of his head and inflicted a serious wound on his temple. He was not supposed to be mortally wounded.

Our informant and his companion came down Sooke river following the blaze made by Mr. Pearce, until they struck the workmen making the regular trail, this trail was being pushed rapidly on and avoided the bluffs where the Chinamen were killed. They followed it about five miles down and got into Nicholson's trail to Metochin.

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A DANGEROUS CUSTOMER.—Capt. Winslow, of the Keasarge, states in his official report that the only shot received from the Alabama which he fears will give them any trouble is a hundred-pounder rifle shell which entered the stern-post of the Keasarge, and remains there unexploded. The extraction of this ugly customer will be rather a hazardous undertaking.

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JOTTINGS FROM SOOKE.

We have been favored by Dr. Walker, who, with a few others, has been travelling through a portion of the Sooke district, with the following notes of his trip:

Arrived at Sooke on Tuesday the 9th, and started from Muir's; course W. N.; found the country thickly wooded with very close and heavy brush consisting of salal, fir, horn, cherry, and young timber, in places almost impenetrable, compelling our party to break down the brush bodily in order to make any way; country gradually rising to a rocky summit about 800 or 900 feet high; crossed a small stream of water about 2 miles out; made about five miles and camped at 6:30 p. m. No water to be had, although a deep cañon with old stream bed was quite near us.

Started again next morning over a gradually descending country, not very closely timbered, but containing many splendid trees, well adapted to spars and masts—many of them would be very valuable in Her Majesty's dockyards. Came to a stream running to the southward about 9 a. m., and quenched our thirst which by this time had been well-nigh insupportable. The bed of this river was about 20 feet wide with a probable rise of 4 feet. Bed rock slate, with superimposed conglomerate, consisting of rounded pebbles and pudding stones—no gold. Continuing our course for half a mile crossed another stream running in the same direction as last with similar formation, most likely a fork of the main water falling into Sooke river. From this point our course lay over a rough broken-up country, gradually rising to the defile in the mountains which we entered travelling on the rocky ridge which forms the centre of the gap, which was flanked on both sides by a deep cañon, that on the north side having a small stream running to the eastward. This rocky ridge gradually increasing in height, at five miles from the opening of the gorge, we ascended one of the mountains on the right bank over 4000 feet high and had a view of the country for about 50 miles. Saw H. M. S. Devastation entering Sooke harbor.

Our view comprehended Victoria, Puca Straits, with the Olympian range, Saanich, the different courses of Sooke, Leech, and other rivers. Camped for the night, and next morning struck Sooke river, about 3½ miles below the forks. The country through which we travelled abounded with deer tracks, three were seen, also, bear, panther, elk, and wolf tracks were numerous; some grouse were seen.

The scenery was grand, rugged and picturesque in the extreme and would have delighted the heart of any true landscape painter. The light and shade with varying purple tints in the evening would vie with the finest views of the West of Scotland. Our stay at Leech river has convinced us of the reality of the auriferous character of the district. From our different points of view the waters of Cowichan, Saanich, Leech, Inda, etc., seemed to head from similar ranges, and led us to suppose that all of them would be found to be more or less gold-bearing.

The character of the gold which we obtained ourselves or saw taken out impressed us with the richness and value of the river, and forced us to believe in the extreme importance of those discoveries. Without doubt the gold has come from the head waters, and not from the banks of Leech river—which is really Sooke river—the character of the banks being in no wise different from that of the bed of the stream, which is composed of slate with the occasional layer of quartz lying inclined and running a little to the southward of west. The river at one time had a large quantity of detritus on its surface; but time and a rapid water power has pretty much washed away the detritus. From our position in the natural riffles of the rocks, or in other words, nature has taken to itself the functions of a ground-sluic, bars being the only place in which pay dirt and gravel in small quantities remain. The immense boulders lying in the bed of the stream bear evidence to the immense flood of water which has at one time rushed down from the mountains at the head. The rise of the stream is scarcely ever as much as 10 feet. Gold in size from 2 dwg nuggets to that of extreme fineness prevails. We have in vain made search for silver, although we reached not that river of that metal will ultimately be discovered; iron pyrites is very scarce, and quartz boulders are frequently to be met with. Our return journey was from the mouth of Leech river to Langford Lake, which we reached in 8½ travelling hours, over a densely timbered and thickly underwooded country. We have no doubt that the trail from the Britannia claim is a preferable one, as it would be almost impossible to make a passable trail by the course which we pursued which was east by north from the Commissioner's tent, bringing us out 1½ miles from Pearce's.

THE CHAIRMAN rose and said, "What has fallen from my learned friend is quite true, but our Council is only in its infancy. With time we may be expected to improve—(Judge Begbie, a loud whisper)—It is to be hoped so." (Laughter.) Our duties have been arduous and we have endeavored faithfully to perform them. How far we have succeeded we must leave to our constituents to judge. Mr. Orr then sat down amidst great cheers.

The Chairman then rose. He said that an attack upon the Council from a quarter whence he least expected it had been made. Unfortunately the attack succeeded, for legislation was now to every member of the Council. He hoped, however, from their past experience and the practical knowledge which was being gathered every day that the future would show a very decided improvement; and that with that improvement, the colony should have good reason to be satisfied that the miners grow rich and the lawyers not less rich than they deserve to be. Three hearty cheers were given for Mr. O'Reilly.

Black and white cheers, and as member for West Cariboo, followed the other two gentlemen, and made the same defence.

Had the miners assembled been a jury of their country to "well and truly try," &c., their representative, I think that the charge would have been acquitted and a verdict of acquittal given without leaving their wine.

"The Bench and the Bar" was next proposed by the Chair, and was well received.

Mr. Justice Begbie, on behalf of the Bench, complimented the miners on the state of tranquility which had reigned for a long time past. He believed that they were a law-abiding community, and the labors of the Bench were, owing to this fact, much lighter than might have been expected. Both Mr. O'Reilly and he felt this, and for which he must thank the miners; he could not forget how much was due to the gentlemen of the Bar for their assistance in alleviating the burden which might otherwise have proved most onerous and irksome. After some further remarks he sat down amidst vociferous cheering, and a chorus by the company. "For they are jolly good fellows."

The clergy was next proposed by the Vice-Chair. The Rev. Mr. Browning for his part felt the solemnity of the hour as well as of the occasion. He said that the life of a clergyman, as stated by the Vice-Chair, was full of hardship and toil, with not the least prospect of reward. He hoped that the object and aim in view was to do good. As for himself, he did not deserve the very flattering encomium which had been paid upon the clergy by the proposer of the toast. He hoped that those present would, however, look upon the performance of his task with a leave of civility. He had heard much about the roughness of miners, but such a characteristic he could not discover to be theirs. He would in fine thank the committee for their kind invitation to such an agreeable repast, and for the still kinder manner in which he had been just now referred to.

Mr. Browning, on behalf of a large class of the Protestant community, thanked the company for the kind manner in which the toast had been received. He had much pleasure in thanking the committee for the invitation, as they had afforded him the opportunity of being present upon an occasion so auspicious. The Governor's arrival had given new life to all, and he hoped that a step so wise in the present would prove but the harbinger of good in the future. The two latter gentlemen were much cheered.

"The Army and Navy" was next proposed by the Vice-Chair, who stated that he felt that he ought to be particularly eloquent as though he had not a Nelson on his right, he had a Cooper, who was well known, and a great favorite in Soke colonies. The toast was received with great cheers, and Lieut. Cooper, R. M., responded in his happiest vein. His remarks were highly appropriate, and were greeted with loud applause.

"Our Foreign Friends" was next proposed by the Chair, and responded to by Mr. Garfield, on behalf of the Americans, and by Mr. Launceston on behalf of the Germans. It is useless for me to attempt to give you any literal idea of the speech made by Mr. Garfield. In necessarily introducing language of my own when my memory failed, I should be afraid of creating an unfavorable impression of what proved to be the speech of the evening. Mr. Garfield's eloquence did honor to the country which he represented, did honor to himself, and did honor to the occasion.

Mr. Launceston arose and said "If brevity is the soul of wit, I shall be the wittest of men, for I shall be brevity itself. Gentlemen, I thank you." Both gentlemen were loudly cheered.

"The Mining Interests of Cariboo" was next proposed by the Vice-Chair, and responded to by Mr. Heseltine and Dr. Howard.

These gentlemen did justice to the toast. Mr. Heseltine, who is a great favorite, and one of the pioneers of the country, gave a slight sketch of his own experience in the colony. Mr. Howard adverted to the general features of the country and spoke of the postal department, its virtues and its necessities. Both gentlemen were cheered and the health of Mr. Heseltine was proposed and drank with loud applause.

"Our Sister Colony" was next proposed by Mr. Walker, and ably responded to by Mr. Kingston. The latter gentleman adverted to the rapid growth of the colonies and to the commanding commercial position of Victoria. "That the fair city might yet; and at no distant day prove a modern Tyne. That the interests of the two colonies were identical, and though some jealousy did exist, it could only have arisen from a spirit of honorable rivalry. The toast and speech were enthusiastically received."

"The Press" was next proposed by the chair and responded to by Mr. Walker. He assured the miners that "Our Special" would never tell any stories that would detract from the value of their claims. After some further remarks three cheers were given for this constituent of every government that has freedom at heart.

"The Ladies" was next given by the Chair, and responded to by Mr. Justice Begbie. This gentleman did them ample justice, but not more than deserved. That would be impossible. If I could only relate one half of the compliments which were paid to the beauty, charming attractions and winning grace of the fair sex which the gentlemen uttered, his career as a bachelor would be short. As the subject is dangerous, I shall leave it by stating that three more jovial cheers were never given."

This was the last regular toast. His Excellency then left and songs, toasts, speeches, cheers, jokes and champagne courses chased each other round the room till daylight in turn pursued and chased them away.

A more pleasant affair of the kind I have seldom witnessed. Nothing disturbed the harmony of the evening and the dinner was a decided success. The singing by Messrs. Mathew, Oliver, Richards, was excellent.

Such was the reception to the first Governor who has visited Cariboo.

The mining news is much the same as when I last wrote.

CALIFORNIA.

(DATES TO THE 18TH)

The fare to New York, by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company's steamship Golden Age, on Tuesday, the 23d instant, is fixed as follows: First cabin, \$264 and \$238; second cabin, \$184; steerage, \$80.

Another monster silver brick, valued at \$4,232, and weighing 165 pounds, was received by the Sanitary Commission yesterday. It was donated to the fund by the employees of the Gould and Curry Mining Company.

John Leonard was arrested on Pacific street by officer King, while he was in the act of cheering Jeff Davis, swearing that he was a Southern man, could eat a d—d Yankee at any time for breakfast, would stand by the South to the death, &c.

Samuel Tetlow, Adolphus Meubert, Walter Bray, Wm. H. Smith, John Roe, (3) and Oliver Orange (2) were arrested on the charge of misdemeanor, by giving theatrical exhibitions on Sunday, and were held to bail for their appearance for examination.

A new tug boat, intended for the Puget Sound trade, was launched. She is owned by Pope and Talbot, who have not yet determined upon the name of their new craft. Her dimensions are: Length, 130 feet; beam, 26 feet 8 inches; depth, 8 feet 4 inches. Mr. D. Marcui is the builder. The boilers were made at the Pacific Foundry. She carries two 16 inch cylinders of five feet stroke, and is very stoutly built.

Among the celebrities who have recently awakened the attention of the British public is Queen Marie Amelie, the widow of Louis Philippe. At the recent marriage of the Count of Paris, son of the Duke of Orleans, to his cousin the Princess Maria, daughter of the Duke of Montpensier, as well as on the occasion of a charity festival at Twickenham, the ex-Queen was present, attracting general admiration by her grace, ease and sprightliness, though in her eighty-third year.

A NEW PRIVATEER.—The N. Y. Times of July 12th has the following:—On the 20th ult. the steamer Black Hawk arrived at Bermuda from London; she is a new vessel, about 1,000 tons register, bark rigged. Her chief engineer has declined going in her to Wilmington, and told our informant that she was going for a register, outfit, guns and ammunition. On account of her great draft of water she can carry no inward cargo, and she is destined for the same trade as the Florida.

BOGS DUST FROM BOISE.—The San Francisco Call says that scarcely a parcel of Boise gold dust reaches the Dalles that is not "doctored." The dealers in the article have immense trouble with the swindlers.

THE NEXT STEAMER.—The steamship Bro. Jonathan, Wolfe, Commander, was advertised to sail from San Francisco for Portland and Victoria on the 24th inst., and may be expected to arrive here about the 1st of September.

THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY did not meet yesterday in consequence of the arrival of the steamer from San Francisco. It will meet to-day at 3 o'clock.

MAJOR FOSTER, the newly appointed magistrate for Sooke, proceeded to the scene of his labors yesterday by the Enterprise.

CARIBOO LETTER.

[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

RICHFIELD, Aug. 8th, 1864.

When a regular newspaper sits down to write his accustomed letter, he must always do so with fear and trembling, lest the usual words—"since my last," or "little has occurred lately," should find themselves leaning like a forlorn hope on a whole battalion of words, strong and dangerous only in the number of their syllables. As this time, however, there is no mast in front to fall into, but a clear and open field, with no enemy save Johnson or Murray to contend with, I shall at once give your readers an account of what has been credited to Master Time during the last six days.

The dinner given at the "French" on Thursday last by the miners, in honor of the Governor's arrival on the creek, occupies a prominent place. His Excellency kindly accepted the invitation, arrived well as usual, the hour appointed. Mr. Justice Begbie, Mr. Commissioner O'Reilly, Rev. Mr. Browne, Rev. Mr. Browning, Mr. Morley, Mr. Mathew, were invited as guests.

The tables formed three sides of a square. The chair was occupied by the member for the district, the Hon. James Orr. His Excellency sat upon his right, and Mr. Justice Begbie upon his left. The Vice-chair was filled by Mr. Walker, and the second vice-chair by Mr. Heseltine.

The guests present were Messrs. Kingston, Launceston, Grier and Steele, who composed the committee; and Dr. Black,