

British Columbia Mining Critic.

"I am Nothing, if Not Critical."—Shakespeare.

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NOTICES.

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EDITORIAL.

THAT CONTRACT.

The badness of the Mann-Mackenzie bargain is practically admitted by the Hon. Mr. Sifton and his colleagues, since they make their defense of it, on the ground of dire necessity based on the urgent need of speedily conveying food supplies to miners in the Yukon, who would otherwise run great risk of starvation. The argument is, however, unconvincing, for tenders could more generally have been called at short notice and by free competition, it being exceedingly likely that amongst some thirty applicants for Yukon railroad charters, a better offer might have been secured. Messrs. Mann & Mackenzie would, moreover, in such case, have in all probability lessened the amount of their demand and been content to take a far less extensive land grant, yet one that might easily recoup them several times their expenditure. There is, indeed, no reason why the Stickine railroad should not be built by the State, unless there be accepted as true the humiliating implied admission that every Dominion public work on a large scale must—whatever government be in office—involve mismanagement, extravagance and boodling. If this be so, then certes Canada has little whereof to boast in respect of efficiency of government, being in this respect far behind the Australian colonies, which both build and work to great public advantage their

own railroads. In fact, say what one may to the contrary, governmental administration is throughout the Dominion far less progressive than that of several of the Antipodean colonies, though it compares favorably with public rule in the States. Meanwhile we sincerely hope that as a result of both external and internal pressure, the Stickine railroad may be extended further south, a condition of the extension arrangement being a very large modification, pro bono publico of the terms of a too hastily concluded and utterly one-sided bargain. United States obstruction may thus prove Canada's opportunity. Meanwhile it is satisfactory to learn that under a prior Dominion charter a second railroad to the Yukon is likely to be built, via the White pass. There aint even Mr. Sifton and his colleagues should rejoice—though seemingly they don't—assuming the validity of their plea for the Stickine railroad agreement. For certes, if there be, as certainly there will be, need in the early future of many and speedy food shipments to the Yukon, two competing railroads will better secure this than one.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The local managers of the snow and ice locomotive transport company, which General Alger, the United States secretary of war, incautiously endorsed, are in trouble at Seattle, charged with fraud on numerous would-be passengers who have paid heavy fares. It is claimed that the concern is not bona fide, though the directors deny the allegation, and are defending themselves in court. In any case it is practically certain that the project will prove an utter failure. The snow and ice engines are used in winter in Michigan lumber camps, but only on logging roads of easy grade and in a far milder climate than the Yukon. Meanwhile the Post Intelligencer laments the fact that many fake transport companies and Klondike bunco steerers are now homed in Seattle. All that the P. I. can say is that Seattle is in this respect no worse than San Francisco or New Orleans, our contemporary being practically obliged to admit that the Sound city is at present choke full of rascals of many kinds, ready to prey on the "young men