

The Klondike Nugget

(DAWSON'S PIONEER PAPER)
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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1899.

NOTICE.

When a newspaper offers its advertising space at a nominal figure, it is a practical admission of "no circulation." THE KLONDIKE NUGGET asks a good figure for its space and in justification thereof guarantees to its advertisers a paid circulation five times that of any other paper published between Juneau and the North Pole.

NEWSPAPER RESPONSIBILITY.

Coincident with the establishment and development of constitutional government came the establishment and development of a free press. Freedom of speech, of action and of religion were never permanently guaranteed by the mere fact that they had been won. Eternal vigilance has always been the price of liberty and always will be so long as human ambitions dominate the human breast. No matter to what extent optimistic theorists may indulge their fancies, the fact remains that the governing force which inspires and directs human action is selfishness.

It is in recognition of these facts that governments such as exist under the British and American constitutions have granted to the press the wide range of latitude in the discussion of matters of public moment which it today enjoys.

For any man to hold for one moment that constitutional liberty could possibly be maintained with a gagged or throttled press would simply be idle talk.

The man who would place the gag or would countenance it being placed, would also forge the chain that he might rivet it about the limbs of an enslaved people.

The greatest guardian of human liberty today is the newspaper. The scheming politician who would not shrink from staining the good name of a nation if by so doing he might gratify some selfish ambition, hesitates when he remembers that his every action is watched and understood by a fearless newspaper. The evildoer, no matter what particular line of activity he follows, has a natural aversion to a newspaper, for his motives are such that they will not stand before the all pervading light of publicity.

In short, the theory of a free government and the theory of a free press are so closely intertwined with, and are so dependent upon each other, that the mind refuses to conceive of one, the other being absent.

The responsibility placed upon a newspaper is a grave one. The freedom accorded it must not be abused nor accepted as meaning license. It is granted extraordinary privileges upon the theory that those privileges will be exercised with discretion and judgment. When those privileges are used for the satisfaction of personal animosity, for the mere sake of gain, or for the benefit of one class to the unmerited detriment of another, they have been abused.

A newspaper is a semi-public institution and while infallibility can not be expected of any creation of the human mind or hand, the public has the right to demand and expect from a newspaper honesty and fairness at least in all its dealings.

It will be an evil day for the liberties of the people when the press is denied the right to discuss and comment upon questions that concern the public weal.

But for this very reason, if for no other, the rights and privileges accorded by law to the press, should be exercised with reason and prudence and not be abused.

FOR DISTINGUISHED HONORS.

Evidently the revenue question is again bothering the Yukon council.

The horrible nightmare of a possible shortage is staring our legislative body in the face. To guard against any deficiency, therefore, which might otherwise occur the newspapers of Dawson are to be invited to make a small contribution to the consolidated territorial revenues.

The sum required from each newspaper would not of itself be sufficient to maintain the ship of state on top of the waves for any considerable length of time. There are only four newspapers in Dawson, and \$5 from each will not pay the running expenses of the territory for more than 30 days—possibly not for that length of time.

It must be remembered, however, that every little counts, and in these days when work on the creeks is slack and money in town somewhat scarce, the sum of \$20—especially when paid in cheechahko, instead of gold dust of uncertain value, is not to be turned away in scorn.

Then, again, it must be remembered that in return for the \$20 a distinguished honor is to be conferred upon the press, viz.: the enrollment in the archives of the territory of a list of owners, editors, managers and everyone else directly or indirectly connected with the local papers.

Certainly it must be that the newspaper men of the Yukon territory have been marked for fame. We may say in this connection that no class of men bear honors with greater modesty than newspaper men.

SCHOOLS.

The Yukon council, in making up the annual budget, has included an estimate of \$10,000 for the purpose of establishing a system of public schools. This action on the part of the council is most commendable. It evidences an inclination long dormant it is true, but at length awakening, to consider seriously the needs of our growing community.

We arise, however, to direct attention of the council to the fact that an emergency exists in Dawson which should be met forthwith. Strictly speaking there is no public school in the city as yet. The school established by the Catholics has, we understand, all the children it can accommodate, and these are only a portion of the number known to be resident in Dawson. Something should be done to provide for the situation, as it exists at the present time. According to the report laid before the council by the Board of Trade, a school can be conducted in Dawson during the remainder of the winter for a comparatively small cost. Pending the establishment of a permanent school system some practicable temporary arrangement should be effected.

At the time of the Stratton disaster a number of the passengers on the ill-fated steamer complained very bitterly of treatment which had been accorded them at Selwyn at the hands of the offi-

cer in charge of the Northwest mounted police stationed at that point. Statements were made to representatives of this paper by a number of thoroughly reputable ladies and gentlemen and these statements were given publication, the authority for the opinions expressed being given in each instance.

The Nugget interested itself in the matter merely to the end that the facts in the case might be brought to light.

In justice to the policeman against whom the complaints were made it was only a matter of simple justice that an investigation should be made.

The complaints having been given wide publicity it occurs to us that the findings of the investigation should be given also to the press in order that it may be made clear to the public mind what the real situation at Selwyn was and what blame, if any, should attach to the officer in charge of the police post.

"A prominent American citizen: 'I think it is extremely bad taste on the part of the aliens to criticise the Yukon government. I am quite confident—in fact in one case it is a matter of personal knowledge on my part—that transactions of a questionable character have transpired, in some of the governmental departments, but I repeat, I deem it extremely bad taste on the part of any of our people to give public utterance to adverse criticism.'"—Yukon Sun.

It is a difficult matter to conceive how such idle twaddle as the above could be imposed upon a long suffering public. It is apparent that the author, if author there was, declined to father his own utterances, else he would not masquerade under the title of a "prominent American citizen." He practically says that he is aware of official crookedness from his own personal knowledge, but is restrained from criticising the same by reason of the fact that he is an American. It would be just as logical, and as wholly in accord with the rules of common sense for a guest at a hotel to refuse to complain of being robbed for fear of injuring the reputation of the house.

The movement to secure the extension of the telegraph line from Dawson to Fortymile and on down to Eagle should receive every assistance possible. Superintendent of Public Construction Charleson has recommended that the line be extended to Fortymile, and as will be noted by reference to the report of the Board of Trade meeting, published elsewhere in these columns, Col. Ray now stationed at Eagle, in command of the American troops has promised to undertake the construction of the line to Eagle and possibly to Circle City as soon as it is completed to Fortymile. If possible the work should be undertaken and completed this winter without wait-

ing the slow process of action from Ottawa.

The law governing the location of ground for hydraulic purposes has been wofully abused. Of the large number of concessions already granted none are now being worked as hydraulic properties. The Anderson concession is being worked as a placer proposition purely and simply, and by the same means which are ordinarily employed. The hydraulic law has resulted merely in the entire country being blanketed with concessions which the locaters hope to sell out to capitalists at some future date. Meanwhile all unrepresented grounds reverts back to the crown and the legitimate prospector gets the worst of it. Such, however, is life in the Klondike.

Every professional and business man in Dawson should become a member of the Board of Trade. That organization has started out well, and already has laid the plans for accomplishing a large amount of good work. It is time that every man who has interests in Dawson learned the benefits to be derived from co-operation with his neighbor. Every public improvement that is carried to a successful conclusion in Dawson means a distinct gain to every man who is in business in the city. The Board of Trade can become a great power in securing from the Dominion government such recognition for the Yukon territory as it is justly entitled to. But it should number every man who has interests in Dawson in its membership.

It is said in a whisper that recent events have blasted forever the hopes of the present crown prosecutor of becoming governor of the territory. Behold how great a fire a small matter doth kindle.

There is a well-defined suspicion abroad that handling a newspaper is some thing like handling a gun. There is no telling when it is liable to go off.

Bodega Reception.

Messrs. Murray & Powell, the new proprietors of the Bodega, were "at home" to a host of their friends Wednesday night, that being the occasion of their grand opening. An elegant lunch, consisting of all the delicacies of the season, was served and partaken of by hundreds of invited guests as well as to many who were self-invited, but who were made welcome. The Bodega is sure to realize on its bid for a good share of the public patronage. Joe Crabne the well-known and popular mixologist, has the day watch, while the proprietors look after the business at night. The new management is as yet undecided as to what use the club rooms will be put, but games will probably be opened in the near future.

Shoff, the Dawson Dog Doctor, Pioneer Drug Store.

1900 calendars, very swell. Nugget office.

CHRISTMAS IN THE KLONDIKE.

Throughout all Christendom the custom of celebrating Christmas by the presentation of gifts has obtained for ages.

Kris Kringle, St. Nicholas or Santa Claus—by one of which appellations the children's patron saint is known throughout the world—has for time immemorial, according to childhood's tradition, had his home in the frozen regions of the northland.

In the Klondike the greatest of all the world's holidays has heretofore been little more than a name, but this year thanks to the growth of Christian sentiment the good old customs of the outer world will universally prevail. Giving and receiving Christmas presents is to be the rule this year. The beneficent Klondikers will give full expression to his generous hearted sentiments and the Yukon will ring with joyousness on Christmas morn.

Perhaps the reader, animated by the desire to do full credit to his bountiful impulses may be at a loss to know just what will be most appropriate. Let us help you. Call at the A. E. Co.'s mammoth store and examine our magnificent line of holiday goods. It will do you good, even if you don't want to buy.

THE STRO

Changes are a little time is conditions which predecessors. son had to elb vast crowds th the various clu of Dawson. course there. 'rubbers' who who would si there was a d at good prices, er town on e worthless, shi born tired, an been most ass of that "tired can well affor knowing full seed time an will come in when the tho work out on city, each man precious dust, joining in the wheels of cor an avidity nev 'Goldopolis.'

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The clerk proceeded to cle.

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"I am afra the clerk retu I am giving but I'm sure so accommod

The clerk compliment what further

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