

THE BRITISH COLONIST.

A. DE COSSIO, Editor.

SATURDAY, DEC. 11, 1858.

In introducing the "BRITISH COLONIST" to the public we are expected to give a bird's-eye view of the course we intend to pursue. To this reasonable demand we cheerfully submit, and trust that when we have done so, our plan will meet the expectations of our friends, and merit the support of our readers and patrons.

We intend, with the help of a generous public, to make the "BRITISH COLONIST" an independent paper, the organ of no clique nor party—a true index of public opinion.

In our National politics we shall ever foster that loyalty which is due to the parent government, and determinedly oppose every influence tending to undermine or subvert the existing connection between the colonies and the mother country.

We shall give a careful summary of inter-colonial politics and news. The great colonial issues of the day will from time to time engage our attention. Particular interest will be taken in the absorbing questions now before the British North American colonies: The union of these colonies, representation in the imperial parliament, the Pacific railroad, and the overland wagon road and telegraph.

In our local politics we shall be found the sure friend of reform. We shall aim at introducing such reforms as will tend to government according to the well understood wishes of the people. It will be a primary object with us to advocate such changes as will tend to establish self-government. The present Constitution we hold is radically defective, and unsuited to the advanced condition of this colony. We shall counsel the introduction of responsible government—a system long established in British America, by which the people will have the whole and sole control over the local affairs of the colony. In short we shall advocate a Constitution modelled after the British, and similar to that of Canada.

In every thing that concerns British Columbia we shall take a deep and permanent interest. The interests of the two colonies, we believe, are identical, and shall receive an equal share of consideration at our hands. To foster the settlement of British Columbia, chronicle its progress, and assist in the establishment of necessary political and commercial reforms, are duties which we cheerfully impose on ourselves. Our columns will ever be open to publish their grievances, and used to demand redress at the hands of the proper authorities.

Our industrial resources will find

us a warm friend. Every effort shall be made to increase our population, to foster agriculture, to develop our mines and our fisheries, and promote the interests of commerce and manufactures.

In the discharge of our duty, when called to speak of efficiency or inefficiency in any department of the public service, we shall applaud merit, and promptly denounce incompetency.

We shall ever be found on the side of law and order. Any attempt to render life or property insecure, or to interfere with the prompt and certain administration of justice, will be sternly rebuked, and the authors exposed to public condemnation. Constitutional means, and Constitutional means only, shall receive our support, in order to alter or modify our laws and institutions.

In conclusion, we hope to make the "British Colonist" a welcome visitor, and a useful auxiliary to the pioneers of British Columbia and Vancouver's Island.

GOV. DOUGLAS' ADMINISTRATION.

In discussing the acts of the Executive of Vancouver's Island and of British Columbia, we have to deal directly with the representative of Her Majesty. There being no Executive Council in either of these Colonies responsible to the people, we have no other course to pursue. It is consequently a much more delicate task for us to comment on the administration of public affairs here, than it would be in our sister Colonies, where the Governor is not held responsible for acts done by the advice of his ministry.

The few observations which we propose to make on the course pursued by our Executive, are prompted solely by a desire to promote the prosperity of these Colonies, and not to awaken in the public a feeling hostile to the person of our Chief Magistrate; nor to divide the Colony into political parties. They proceed from no personal feeling which we entertain: We never asked at the hands of His Excellency any favor; consequently have received no refusal calculated to create a private pique. We are and always have been his well-wisher. We differ with him as to the policy which he has pursued; believing that he has been prompted to the performance of acts, by unconstitutional advisers, which have tended to retard the progress of these colonies.

We do believe that no man ever had a more favorable opportunity to distinguish himself as a statesman than Gov. Douglas. Everything conspired in his favor. Gold was discovered in British Columbia. Tens of thousands came eager to engage in the introduction of all the appliances of civilization, and thus lay in a few weeks the foundation of a nation in a land almost unknown. Nothing was required but mind to organize, and the disposition to use it. Gov. Douglas was the most prominent person here at this auspicious season. He was the only one who could with color of right interfere. Had he then taken due advantage of

that happy combination of circumstances, history would have ranked him with Clive and with Hastings; he would have received the merited honor of adding a bright jewel to the British Crown. Had he then proved himself a statesman, he would have been clearly entitled to a special reward at the hands of his Sovereign. To day he would have been the most popular man in these colonies. His life would have been honored; his death lamented, and his name imperishable.

Unfortunately for these colonies Gov. Douglas was not equal to the occasion. He wanted to serve his country with honor, and at the same time preserve the grasping interests of the Hudson's Bay Company inviolate. In trying to serve two masters he was unsuccessful as a statesman. His administration was never marked by those broad and comprehensive views of government, which were necessary to the times and to the foundation of a great colony. It appeared sordid; was exclusive and anti-British; and belonged to a past age. A wily diplomacy shrouded all. An administration so marked—one with a doubtful claim to "exclusive trade and navigation"—could not well be other than unpopular, and unsuccessful.

From the outset, we could see no other course than a liberal and expansive policy. We arrived among the earliest. We soon saw and learned enough to convince us that a great gold country had been discovered; that the consequence was, death to monopoly. How Gov. Douglas could have been advised by friends, in the colony or out of it, to entertain the views expressed in his dispatch of that period, (May 8, 1853), we know not. For ourself when we read it we were astonished. From his reputation we expected any thing but a recommendation almost tantamount to a prohibition of the immigrants. It is incomprehensible to us how any person could think that England—the foremost country of the world in the path of freedom and free trade—should expect any number of persons who might think proper to enter her territories, to "swear allegiance or give security for their good behavior," ere they should be allowed to engage in industrial pursuits. To think of England—who was then engaged in battering down the walls of an exclusive despotism—making a breach through which Constitutional laws, enlightened religion, the peaceful arts of commerce, could be introduced to shackled millions—that she could assent to propositions of that character, is to us unaccountable. Fortunately for these colonies an enlightened minister presided over the colonial department, whose reply was: "Let them enter."

The great mistake of the administration occurred early. Instead of taking the responsibility to throw the country open to free trade and colonization; instead of sinking all sordid considerations for the public good, we fear our Executive gave honeyed words to those whom he would partially prohibit; made his policy approximate to "masterly inactivity;" published obstructive proclamations for acts; and excused all by a

doubtful claim to "exclusive trade and navigation."

Such were not the measures which would entitle the author to the most exalted niche in the temple of fame.

Some responsibility was taken, however. The blockade was ended, and foreign vessels allowed to navigate Fraser's river. A more necessary measure could not have been conceived; nor one more worthy of commendation. But why were not greater responsibilities assumed, and the country opened to trade and settlement? Certainly the resources of the country were better known to the Executive than any one else. The reason is patent: "The exclusive claim to trade and navigation loomed up;" to open the country would be poaching on the Company's preserves. It is presumed however, that if His Excellency had foreseen the temper of the British people relative to the Company, he would have inaugurated a different state of things; and the country would not have received a wound which it will take years to heal.

More than was done was expected from the Chief-Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Chief-Factor, in the opinion of all here, could have proved himself a more practical business man, benefited the Company more, and injured the colony less, had he acted on their claim to "exclusive trade," by granting a license to trade, or by promptly imposing a duty for the Company's benefit, as is said was the case at first with the ten per cent duty. By this means the trader would have followed the miner, and settled up the country, and thousands who have left our shores would have remained to add millions to our productive wealth.

A favorable season was frittered away, without proper encouragement being shown to a hardy and enterprising population to settle down in the country. The small amount of progress which was made, is not one per cent of what could have been accomplished had a more liberal disposition been shown towards colonization. Towns, villages, farms, mills, roads,—every thing would have been done which a strong will and a skillful hand saw necessary to secure the reward of persevering industry. Fraser's river would, to day, stand high abroad; greater prosperity would be experienced at home. Of the many hundreds who have left this port, not a tithe would have gone. The majority of the Lillooet traders would have remained, had it not been grossly mismanaged, and 400,000 dollars added to the debt of the colony when a third of the amount would have sufficed. Provisions would have been plenty; the upper Fraser thoroughly prospected; permanent settlements made, and the material wealth of the colony largely increased. To day the Californian press, instead of denouncing Fraser's river as a humbug, would have been our jealous advocates.

Hundreds have told us there is plenty of gold on Bridge river; plenty on Fraser; the average diggings are ahead of California; but we have no provisions. We cannot stay to shiver and starve; we shall return. Who then is responsible for this wholesale depopulation of the

country? We fear it will be the tardy, ill-digested, policy of our Executive, have left the colony in debt.

We firmly believe that of our Executive were got too honorable a gentleman, sible to contemporaneous fame, to have entertained an honest desire to be tried; but to the preponderance of the Hudson's Bay counsellors—ever hostile of civilization—we may great measure these discrepancies.

For a long period the Company claimed, under 1858, that the "exclusive with the Indians," meant right to trade and navigation was always a doubtful claim now confirmed in our was based on unwarrantable. The proclamation annulling of 1858, does not mention the "exclusive right to Indians." In the confer the Executive and House different position was affixed it apparently differs with proclamation. If that have the exclusive right still, as far as the public is not annulled in the proclamation hope that the government the public on this matter, such an important bearing administration.

We did suppose that the past would have been a more consummate policy. But judging from a recent establishing a tariff, and a port of entry for British we think there is still for amendment; and that must be surrounded by who desire to prostitute suit private ends. If it retard the advancement of bia, we believe it is well accomplish its purpose.

Though the tendency interest at Victoria, still as a country, we can expect to the insane and excluding British Columbia rect trade of the world.

The reasons for this calamation are the most pe ever offered by a law. We quote: "There is at acer in British Columbia evy the duties aforesaid, n the said colony at which les can be conveniently which an officer can con posted." This we view as der. For why were not the convenience of British Columbia instead of the convenience it cannot be supposed the las wishes the public to stand that Langley is an a station. At home the shortly demonstrate its By order of Gov. Douglas at Langley to a very large it occur to His Excellency

TO fix a uniform rate to missions. The question uniform basis for acco rates will be discussed la

COWARDLY ASS

Non-Union Worker Set U and Beaten Into In

Chicago, Dec. 12.—John non-union electrician Chicago Telephone Com tacked by several union s day and beaten into ins condition is said to be cri

EMPEROR WILLIAM