

The Klondike Nugget

(DAWSON'S PIONEER PAPER)
ISSUED SEMI-WEEKLY

On Wednesday and Saturday

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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.

The Nugget has a regular carrier and express service covering Bonanza, Eldorado, Hunker, Sulphur and Dominion creeks and tributaries. Mail orders taken and prompt delivery guaranteed on all the above. Orders for delivery of papers, mail or express may be left at the Nugget Express office or given to creek agents.

Ogilvie's Proclamation.

The first public expression of dissatisfaction against the doings of the Dawson officials was made through the columns of this paper. This was followed by a mass meeting more issues of the Nugget containing exposures of rottenness and more mass meetings. It became a weekly matter to unearth some prurient wrong and for an indignation meeting to gather thousands of our citizens together on the street corners to indorse the Nugget and demand reform. The local powers took a stubborn course and not only refused to remove Mr. Fawcett but actually indorsed him as both honest and competent. The agitation refused to die down as had been hoped by those most interested and the result of the mass meeting was a miners' committee. The committee was scoffed at by officials but they immediately went to work and among other things forwarded a statement to Ottawa of existing conditions compiled from the unanswered charges made by the Nugget. The letter was addressed to Sir Wilfred Laurier, under date of August 25. At Ottawa no attention was paid to the letter even in the way of acknowledgment and the Nugget kept up its unwavering course of exposing wrong wherever seen. The Canadian papers began to republish everything we printed and at last a continent was ringing with accounts of the evils from which we suffer. The fact that the charges were published right here in Dawson and remained unrefuted and undisputed, was considered by the Canadian press as sufficient proof of their truth. Then the great English journals took up the matter and it was suggested by the central government to the Colonial government that investigation of Klondike affairs was necessitated by the very agitation they were refusing to notice. Then the unwilling secretary of the interior, Mr. Sifton, dug up the despised letter from the miners' committee and called attention to the fact that he was already in communication with the dissatisfied ones and was moving in the matter. Thus almost five months of agitation resulted in the appointment of Mr. Ogilvie as investigating commissioner. The governor has had printed a number of posters setting forth his appointment as investigator, recounting the letter from the committee to Laurier and then concluding as follows:

"Public notice is hereby given that on Monday, the 6th day of February, 1899, at the hour of 11 o'clock in the forenoon, I will sit at the court house in Dawson for the purpose of fixing a time within which charges following within the scope of the letters patent are to be laid before me, and let all persons desirous of prosecuting any such charges then appear and they shall be heard either in person or by counsel as they may prefer.

"After the expiration of the time fixed for laying charges before me I shall proceed to fix a time and place for the investigation of such charges, of which time and place, due and public notice will be given."

The foregoing may be posted on every tree on the Klondike without serious results of itself. The most important part of Mr. Ogilvie's commission has in some manner been left out of the proclamation, and without that part of it being well

understood there will be no results at all tending to lessen the scandals which are being so much discussed upon the outside. The commission to investigate provides the necessary powers under a certain Canadian law which says that evidence given by witnesses shall not be used against themselves.

It would also appear from the proclamation that the public is invited to come forward and tell what they know; when the commission expressly empowers the governor to compel them. The former is a weakly way of investigating and the latter the only proper way. Men who have grown rich in a year by dividing the profits of secret information are neither going to file charges nor voluntarily testify to the wrong doing. Neither does the proclamation set forth that the falling down of a charge is not perjury and is not punishable.

It is very doubtful if that proclamation is going to be productive of a single charge—God knows not because charges are not deserved, but simply from the inherent weakness of human nature which prevents a conspirator from voluntarily betraying his fellow, or men from telling of their friends misdoings. In seven months the Nugget has published some 70 odd accounts of wrong doing, and in all that time not more than a half dozen cases were given us voluntarily. There undoubtedly is such a fear and distrust burned into the hearts of the people that the further they can escape from officialism the better they are pleased. Men are fearful of the tenure of their acquired rights and properties; terrified lest their harmless every day doings may be construed by some angry official into a breach of the law; scared to allow themselves to be conspicuous in the denouncing of official evils—all of which is a curious study of itself in a people so self-assertive at home. The fact is that many of our American friends will never know to the time of their death that in the Yukon they were living under a flag as free as their own. If people will but throw their cowardice behind them, their demands for their rights will be as quickly heard and as instantly productive of good results in Dawson as in Seattle.

The Nugget has received a communication from Mr. Ogilvie inviting us to formulate in writing any charges we may care to make. This paper has been issuing printed charges from its office for seven months which to be heard must be reduced to writing. Clean nonpareil print must be laid aside for long hand. Well! so be it.

A PLEA FOR PUBLICITY.

The publicity given officials and official doings is the only safeguard given the public. With an honest and capable judge in possession, a courtroom can be closed to the public without the perpetration of wrong; yet centuries of history prove a closed court to be the only check to eventual fraud or oppression. For prudential reasons, not disparaging our judges, our courts are open to the press and public except in cases of nastiness. Ages of experience has also brought about the custom of admitting the press and public to all legislative bodies as city councils, state and provincial legislatures, county commissioner's meetings, school boards, town boards, etc., etc. It remained for the Yukon territory to take a backward step into the darkened years of the Twelfth century and close every door through which the press might hear and advise a long suffering people of the why and the wherefore of the men who regard themselves as holding us all in the hollow of their hands. The Nugget fails to see either rhyme or reason for the closing against it of the doors of the gold commissioner's office when cases are being heard and disposed of. The trial and decision might be those of a Solomon, yet the public would be suspicious of those closed doors and that secrecy.

Again, Clerk Hurdman has been reinstated upon his high stool behind the bench claim window. This means, if it means anything, that his case has been secretly investigated and the charges for which he was suspended have been declared of no moment. Only in an irregu-

lar hearsay way do we know of the defense, if any there was, and a skeptical public refuses to believe that the aforesaid gentleman has been purged of any offense in recording an unsurveyed claim and accepting a deed for a third interest. The public is ever suspicious of secret trials and investigations as will be readily conceded is sufficiently proven by the present howl throughout Christendom about that veritable farce perpetrated in France and called the Dreyfus trial or court martial. Mr. Ogilvie is about to hold an investigation into the doings of officials. If that investigation should be secret and should pronounce the gold commissioner's office a paradise and the clerks incipient angels and the records masters of penmanship and bookkeeping the world would only wag its head and wink at itself knowingly. It would prove nothing—to the people.

Again, we have in Dawson a legislative body known as the Yukon council—we say known advisedly, for not a sacrilegious eye of an unofficial mortal has ever been permitted to gaze upon that resplendent body of law makers. True, the Nugget publishes what purports to be the doings of that council, but we have no actual knowledge that this is so, or that a single one of many things reported to be said and done are really facts. While gratefully acknowledging the kindness of those who furnish us the verbal accounts of the council's doings, the Nugget maintains that the council is as much a legislative body as the House of Commons and the press is just as much entitled to be present. The public has as much right to object to measures discussed and made into law behind the sealed doors of the Yukon Council chamber as Canada would have to protest against laws of which the first knowledge they had was through the columns of an unread official gazette. The first that we know of any law, good or bad, in any official way is when we see it in the Miner-Sun. The condition of affairs as above stated cannot be justified upon any grounds other than amateurship at trying to govern—some body afraid of slips and breaks being detected and laughed at. We do not believe the secrecy of the council chamber is maintained from any ulterior motives. Yet the excruciating secrecy is already producing its evil fruits and it is anticipated, it will be found the cause of many future scandals. Why an honest legislator of intelligence should fear the light of publicity is beyond conjecture. What is more, we know of no law for it. It is not a cabinet nor is it an executive body as the governor in council at Ottawa. We protest vigorously against this lapse into a Russian semi-barbaric autocracy of a government without responsibility or amenability to the people governed. We are not a lot of half-witted aborigines who cannot be trusted to hear aright or understand the sage sayings of our rulers in council. Sometimes the deliberations might be of an advisory nature and when this is so in other legislative bodies it resolves itself into a committee of the whole, which of course excludes the press and public alike; but why our readers should not be advised of the progress or death of the Dawson incorporation ordinance is more than our comprehension can grasp. Is it possible that the first we shall know of it is when some day we read in the official gazette that we are already incorporated, not by our will, not by God's will but by the council's will, as decided upon in secret session.

REBELLIOUS PHILIPPINOS.

The acquirement of the Philippines by the United States is not being accompanied by unpleasant concomitant circumstances. The fact is that the United States has found itself most successful in government by treating its people, whether black or white, as men. Now the Philipinos are a kinky-haired race of black men, intermixed in some localities with the Spanish but wholly unlike the black men of our own continent, and wholly indisposed to take up the government of the United States as superior or equal in any way to their own, or to concede that the United States has acquired any rights by conquest.

In deciding the terms of peace in Paris the United States commissioners found themselves in something of a predicament. During the Spanish-American war the Philipinos had drawn themselves up in line as allies of the all-conquering white men, and as allies had become doubly offensive to their old task masters, the Spaniards. In the settlement, American sentiment was found to be too strong to leave those allies—black, ignorant and vicious as they were—in the hands of their former merciless masters, and the Philipinos were freed from the Spanish yoke. The news brought in by the last mail that the Philipinos were actually on the point of making a military demonstration against the United States, declaring they must be as free from Uncle Sam as from Spanish domination would be funny were it not so tragic. Comment is unnecessary; there can be but one outcome. If the United States government decides for a protectorate, a protectorate it will be whether the natives wish it or not.

Governor Tanner Indicted.

Governor Tanner, governor of the State of Illinois, has been found guilty of wilful neglect, resulting in death and amounting to manslaughter in a backwoods county with the unchristian name of Macoupin. The why and the wherefore is that the governor refused to furnish the Virden Coal Co. with troops upon the occasion of their bringing in armed blacks from the south to take the place of striking miners. The governor notified the company that if they brought in armed blacks it was in the nature of a justification of the state and the results would be upon their own heads. The result was as might be anticipated; the scared negroes opened fire on the crowd from the train and the crowd answered in kind as long as the train was in sight to shoot at. Some 27 were killed and hundreds wounded. The following are some of the telegrams which were exchanged before the riot:

From the company—Oct. 8th. Your office has been notified of present conditions at Virden where armed men bottled the streets in the vicinity of our mines. Sheriff Davenport has publicly stated his inability to control them. We look to you for preservation of law and order and effectual prevention of bloodshed.

Oct. 10th. The mob of armed men at Virden is awaiting the arrival of men who are going to work there, with the avowed intention of assault and not of defense. We absolutely decline to assume any of the responsibility that the laws of Illinois place upon the executive.

The governor's reply—Oct. 10th. Under present well-known conditions at Virden, if you bring in this imported labor, you do so according to your own messages, with full knowledge that you will provoke riot and bloodshed.

From the sheriff—Oct. 11th. One thousand armed men, mostly from points outside of Macoupin, are unlawfully assembled in this city and bloodshed and loss of life of citizens is liable to occur at any hour. I do not consider that by their own life safe, as the situation is absolutely beyond my control. This is my appeal to you for aid. If you cannot place troops here immediately I must be absolved from all responsibility for results.

To the sheriff—Oct. 12th. As long as the company persists in importing labor I will furnish troops unless rioting occurs.

Interview on Oct. 12th, after the riot. These avidacious mine-owners have so far forgotten their duties to society as to bring about a riot upon the fair name of our state; have gone far enough—yes, too far—as they had fair warning from me by wire and telephone that the importations of labor, which brings to our state an undesirable class of citizens had stop. And I say, now, to such an all-out that this is a thing of the past, that it shall not be tolerated in Illinois while I am governor. These men, the president and officers of this company, who precipitated this riot by the bringing in of this imported labor, are guilty of murder and should be, and I believe will be, indicted by the grand jury of Macoupin county and tried and convicted for the heinous offense.

FEARLESS RELIABLE INDEPENDENT

The "Nugget"

DAWSON'S PIONEER PAPER

The best and most accurate history of the Klondike country that ever will be written will be found in the files of the NUGGET. Every miner should have the NUGGET in his cabin. Delivered regularly by carrier on all creeks.

Our facilities for executing

JOB WORK

are the very latest.

Prompt Attention Given to All Orders

If you are in need of any of the following articles they can be found at the NUGGET OFFICE

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MEMO BOOKS, POCKET BOOKS, TIME BOOKS

TABLETS, PENS, PENCILS,

KLONDIKE MAPS, CASH BOXES

Bill of Sale Blanks, Document Envelopes, Deeds, Leather Dusters, Letter Files, etc.

THE "NUGGET"

Three doors north of A. N. T. & Co.

OUTSIDE NEWS

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