

The Weekly British Colonist

Wednesday May 24th 1871

Our New Goldfields.

Every express from Omineca brings accumulative evidence of the richness and extent of the great Eldorado of the North. It would appear to be quite beyond all reasonable doubt that there is a large extent of country drained by the Peace River and its numerous tributaries which affords rich shallow diggings—that is to say, diggings in which a miner can take out his twenty to thirty, forty or even fifty dollars a day with inexpensive appliances and without delving deep. And it needs no argument to show that this is the class of diggings at once the most attractive and profitable to the masses. Where every man can work his own claim and take out an amount of gold daily a much more prosperous condition of things will obtain than can possibly be the case where the few lucky ones dig out fortunes and the many fail to make both ends meet. Doubtless Omineca will find to have its deep and difficult diggings too; but in rich, shallow diggings it would at present appear to surpass any other goldfield in the Colony. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that there should be a considerable tendency of population in that direction. We think ourselves justified in saying that fully two hundred people have gone in or are now on their way in to these new mines; and as intelligence of fresh discoveries makes its way through the various communities most disposed to look in this direction it cannot be doubted that there will yet be considerable accessions before the present season closes. Conversations with intelligent persons coming from neighboring countries would lead us to believe that a considerable influx may be expected to take place within the next month. Whatever anxiety we may have felt about the ability of the Colony to follow up with supplies a large population has disappeared before the energy and enterprise being displayed upon both routes, more especially upon the central one. There is now no reason to apprehend that those resorting to Omineca will be called upon to encounter one-half of the hardships which beset the early miners in Cariboo. They will have much less to pay for the necessities of life with a greater certainty of getting the "wheatmeal" from their claims. We hope to be able to state before long that beef cattle can be driven into the new gold fields and sold at ten cents a pound or more, and that the provision market in Omineca will not be appreciably dearer than that of Cariboo. It will be best not to calculate upon any material improvement in trade this year consequent upon these new mines. Of the probable value of the gold here we can only say that it is not likely to be one-third as great as Omineca, but persons who have merely left one part of the colony for another, but it will be quite safe to reckon upon a large addition to the population and a consequent improvement in trade next year, should the new diggings come up to anything near the estimate we have been led to form respecting them. Not must our older and, perhaps, less attractive gold fields be altogether lost sight of in the brilliant light of the new. It would, indeed, be a crime to desert so old and faithful a friend like Cariboo. But Cariboo is in no danger of such a fate so long as she continues to yield up her rich treasures as profusely as she does now. We have never ceased to think that Cariboo's richest store-houses have yet to be unlocked.

Friday, May 19th. Rabson vs Howard—This was an action for assault and false imprisonment. Damages laid at \$5000. A. R. Robinson, Esq. instructed by Mr. Courteney, for the plaintiff. For the defendant, J. F. McCaigh, Esq. instructed by Mr. Bishop. Many witnesses were called. From the evidence it seems that in the month of January last, defendant, lost a saw and on certain circumstances he was led to believe plaintiff had stolen it. He went to plaintiff's house, saw the saw and gave it in charge to constable Hader. He then complained and had plaintiff arrested. The magistrate almost immediately discharged plaintiff, who, a day or two afterwards, commenced proceedings against defendant in the Supreme Court for false arrest and imprisonment. Defendant also, within a day or two, obtained a subpoena from the Stipendiary Magistrate on a charge of theft, for stealing the saw. The case occupied the Police Court two or three days and the charge was dismissed. The evidence and facts of the case were then pretty fully given to the public. The evidence yesterday varied but little, except on one, as regards the plaintiff's case, most vital point. Plaintiff alleged that he borrowed the saw from defendant and swore that he borrowed it on the 31st January, 1871, and that he got it from Caroline Nunn in defendant's house. Defendant swore she went down to the wharf where Mrs Howard was fishing and asked her to lend her father the saw; that Mrs Howard told Caroline Nunn to give it to her father (the plaintiff), and that this occurred on Monday, January 31st. Plaintiff also swore that he saw Mrs Howard on the wharf, fishing at 3 o'clock on that day. This testimony was contradicted by three or four witnesses, who swore that Mrs Howard and Caroline Nunn were both in Victoria at the time.

Other evidence was given of contradictory statements made by Rabson as to how he got the saw. To one he said that he borrowed it from Mrs Howard, to another that he borrowed it from Mr Rabson and to another that somebody left it at his house. The Chief Justice in summing up said the question for the jury to decide was—Had defendant reasonable cause to believe that plaintiff had stolen his saw? If so he was justified in causing his arrest. Stealing is not going stealthily in the night or in some clandestine way only, but it is a man gets possession of another man's property in any way or by any means, and it is theft. It had been proved by two witnesses that defendant said in the hearing of plaintiff that he had lost his saw and that plaintiff denied having it. He would say also to the jury that if they disbelieved the plaintiff, who had been, in a most important point, contradicted beyond a doubt, his whole case must fall and they must find for the defendant.

The jury retired at 7 o'clock and the Court returned at 8 o'clock, at which hour the jury returned a verdict for the defendant. The Court thanked the jurors, directed that they be paid \$1 50 each, and adjourned until Monday next at 11 o'clock, a.m. OBITUARY.—Under the proper head will be found the announcement of the death of one of our early and most estimable settlers, Jas Fleming, senior, aged seventy-one years. Deceased left his native Scotland in 1852 and joined his son James in Canada, and in 1854 both went to Australia. Father and son both landed in this city in September, 1857, and in the following month they settled at Kaitumaie, Cowichan, where deceased continued to reside with his affectionate son until only surviving child of seven—up to the time of his death. The patience and fortitude, indeed, cheerfulness, with which the subject of our present remarks struggled with the privations and hardships incident to pioneer life, and the Christian resignation with which he bore up under a painful and protracted illness won for him the respect and admiration of his neighbors. He was one of the noblest works of God—a honest man—and has gone to his rest.

Friday, May 20. CAPTURED.—Two thieves, lately from Victoria, have been arrested by Sheriff Van Bokkelen of Port Townsend, W T, upon charges of burglary. A house was entered at Fort Discovery and a gold watch, some money and a revolver stolen. These two men were tracked by the Sheriff, some miles to the farm-house where the goods were hidden, and the character of her guests—spread, from a bonfire dinner. As they sat eating the Sheriff entered and clapped the thieves on their wrists. They were searched and no stolen property found upon them. They were subsequently fished out of the butter milk in a churn standing in the kitchen. The rascals are now in Port Townsend goal.

PAYING JURORS.—At the close of the Rabson-Howard trial, last evening, the Chief Justice directed that \$150 be paid to each of the jurors for his services. This is the first instance, we believe, in this colony where common jurors have been paid; and as the Chief Justice remarked—we can discover no reason why they should not, as well as witnesses, receive pecuniary compensation.

Court of Assize.

Before Chief Justice Douglas, and Justice Croese.

Friday, May 19th.

The steamer Otter returned from Hastings, Barford Inlet, yesterday morning. She towed the Ship Dashing Wars, 1000 tons burthen, to the mill, reaching the wharf at 6 o'clock in the evening. The eastern gale of Friday was terrific but no damage is reported.

DAWSONS.—A section of the sidewalk of Pandora street, below the residence of Mr E. Siro, has given way and pedestrians are placed in great danger, particularly after dark.

THE 'NORTH PACIFIC'.—Such is the name of Capt Starr's new Puget Sound steamer. She was successfully launched at San Francisco on Thursday night, and will shortly sail for Victoria. See our Exclusive Dispatch.

DISPATCH LINE.—The schooner Greyhound of the Dispatch Line, sailed from San Francisco yesterday morning. She comes consigned to Mr Millard. See our Exclusive Dispatch.

THE SIR JAMES DOUGLAS will go to Nansaimo on Monday at 7, returning on Tuesday evening. Freight must be shipped and letters mailed to-day.

THE COCKER.—A few tickets for the concert on Tuesday evening remain undisposed of. Seats may be secured on Monday and Tuesday.

GRAND JURY.—This body will present its report on Monday. It is understood that the defective drainage of the city will be alluded to—and a very proper allusion it will be.

THE PRINCE ALFRED.—This steamer, although somewhat longer than the Pacific, will, it is thought, be brought into this harbor.

SAILED.—The steamship Prince Alfred sailed at 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon for Victoria direct.

THE SCHOONER Stagbound will sail for San Francisco to-morrow morning. She will have a good freight.

THE PROPPELLER California, from Victoria, reached Portland last evening at 5 o'clock. See our Exclusive Dispatch.

THE SAILING of the California from Portland for Nansaimo and Sitka has been postponed until to-morrow.

THE G S WRIGHT will sail for Portland at 6 o'clock this morning.

CLEAN SHEET at the Police Court yesterday.

THE OTTER will sail for Steenhamouth about the middle of next week.

SAILED.—The steamer Enterprise for New Westminster and the label for Nansaimo.

WEAK AND DROOPING.—Flour and grain at previous quotations.

ENGLAND AWAKENING.

In a recent article on the Canadian Pacific Railway, it is commonly called, or the British Atlantic and Pacific Railway, as it is to be called, the Money Market Review says: 'Under these circumstances the railway will be made sooner or later there can be no doubt. With interests so numerous, so vast, and with such means at command, the difficulty of constructing this Hudson Bay Railway ought to assume the most moderate proportions. Great Britain, Canada, British Columbia, New Zealand, Australia, the Hudson Bay Company, and the International Society, all want the Railway, and it would be amazing if with such interests and such resources it could not be made and made properly. In India, State guarantees had been given, and are promised upon railway capital, sufficient to construct this line ten times over, and it is a question whether any one Indian Railway is more useful than this even for state purposes.'

St. Nicholas Hotel.

GOVERNMENT STREET, VICTORIA, B. C.

St. Nicholas Hotel.

Is now Open for the Reception of Guests. And is recommended to the Travellers by the FIRST-CLASS HOTEL.

THE ROOMS HAVE ALL BEEN REFURNISHED.

CLEANLINESS AND GOOD ORDER.

APARTMENTS will be let by the DAY WEEK MONTH, at a Great Reduction from former rates, and Travellers are recommended to respect the Hotel's reputation and accommodation elsewhere. J. F. FRIED.

BOARDING HOUSE.

For St. Nicholas Hotel, Victoria, B. C.

CONDUCTED BY MRS. G. MASON.

BOARD AND LODGING PER WEEK, \$1 00.

BOARD AND LODGING PER DAY, 30 CENTS.

SINGLE MEALS, 10 CENTS.

Registration of Voters.

FORMS.

MAY BRAD.

BRITISH COLONIST OFFICE.

HARMONIUMS.

EX-PRINCE OF WALES.

BOSS.

COR. STORE & JOHNSON STREETS.

AND BRICK ST.

GOVERNMENT ST. COR. JOHNSON.

IS NOW PREPARED TO SUPPLY.

MINERS FOR CARIBOO & OMINECA.

Best & Cheapest Assortment of Groceries, Provisions, LIQUORS of all kinds.

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NO HUMBUG! BOSS! MEANS THE CORRECT THING!

Farmers.

BOSS!

Steamer Emma—Testimonial.

Wanted Person Just Arrived.

THE ROYAL MAIL Steam Packet Company.

ARE PREPARED TO RECEIVE.

TWO YEARS RIGOROUS IMPRISONMENT.

SELLING SPURIOUS ARTICLES.

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