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Is the State of our Finances Satisfactory to the Imperial Government?

The unsatisfactory state of the Colonial finances having been allowed by the Governor to develop itself into what may now, without exaggeration, be called a system, it may be useful to pursue the subject further, and to inquire with what favor this system of extravagance is likely to be regarded by the Imperial Government; and in so doing it will be necessary for us to refer to a dispatch dated in April, 1866, from Mr Cardwell, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, addressed to the Officer administering the Government of British Columbia, which dispatch contained a copy of a letter from the Board of Treasury to the Colonial Office, in which the financial condition and policy of the Colony for the years 1864 and 1865 is animadverted upon in very plain and unmistakable language. As the letter has already been published in our columns, we do not propose to quote at any length from it, suffice it to say that considerable doubt is expressed of the correctness of the estimates of revenue, and the proposed expenditure for the year under discussion is condemned for its extravagance in exceeding the expected income, even in case of the most favorable circumstances which could then occur, by more than £5000; the Colonial Office is requested to warn the Governor "as strongly as possible against that hasty and sometimes ill considered, expenditure, which a loan policy is apt to encourage; but the continuance of which, on the cessation of such policy, is seldom prevented without more than ordinary care." The Lords of the Treasury wind up by requesting a full statement from the Governor of the actual receipts and disbursements, and a full account of the liabilities of the Colony. Mr Cardwell in his dispatch expresses his entire concurrence in the observations of their Lordships, and gives most positive instructions that the expenditure of the year then current must be reduced to such an amount as would be covered by a revenue calculated on the actual average receipts of the two preceding years. Since this dispatch was written a variety of changes have taken place; the Colonies have been united, the office of Secretary of State has twice changed hands, and the Lords of the Treasury who caused the letter to be penned are no longer in office; but it is not likely that the policy either of the Colonial Office or of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury has undergone any change, so far as discouraging extravagance in the Government of Crown colonies who have been borrowers. What then has been the course of business since April, 1866? Have the instructions of the Colonial Secretary been followed by the Governor or not? It is true that the Union of the Colonies would necessitate some increase in the expenditure for the Government of the increased Colony of British Columbia, but we must also allow for an increase in the revenue consequent upon the absorption of the income of Vancouver Island, which if the reductions in the civil list authorized by Lord Carnarvon had been made would have much more than compensated for the increased expenditure. The receipts on the mainland were known to have fallen, and were still falling far below the average of the two preceding years at the time of the Union; consequently a prudent Governor, without any out the spirit of Mr. Cardwell's instructions, would have caused the estimates for the first financial year of the Union to be prepared with that "more than ordinary care" suggested by the lords of the treasury. Well aware that any further extension of the loan system would not be sanctioned, the Governor ought to have insisted upon the strictest economy of expenditure and if the instructions of Mr. Cardwell have really been so interpreted by the Executive of this Colony as to be taken as an authority for estimating the expenditure upon the actual average receipts of both Colonies for the two years preceding the Union, the spirit of the instructions have not been acted upon. It remains then to consider whether the Imperial Government will take sufficient interest in our finances to interfere in any way. So far as Vancouver Island was concerned, it does not seem that the same parental solicitude was exercised; the Lords of the Treasury did not apparently concern themselves so much whether the Government of the Island incurred liabilities which it was not likely to meet; was it that the mainland was more tenderly beloved than the Island, by the mother country? or is the true solution of the mystery to be found in the difference between the Colony which had its own local legislature, and that which had none? Assuredly if the latter be the case, the Commissioners of the Treasury must be inquiring closely into the reasons for the continued extravagance of British Columbia, and when they have carefully digested the statements of actual receipts and disbursements, and the account of the liabilities of the Colony for 1867, we shall probably hear how they like them.

Friday, Aug 21

COLONIAL SOCIETY.—One of the most important movements bearing on the future welfare of the British Colonies in general, has recently been inaugurated in London. The constitution of the Society is like that of the Royal Society of London, and its principal object is to make all the colonies throughout our dominions familiar with each other, by a periodical publication of their commerce, population, requirements, products, capabilities and general statistics through its agency. By these means no individual colony can be overlooked or treated with injustice for any length of time; and therefore we ought all to hail the fact that by the instrumentality of this Society, indifference and procrastination in the Colonial office which at different periods have been complained of in every country are brought to an end. Supported by such men as the Marquis of Normandy, Lord Bury, Mr Chichester Fortescue and other noblemen and members of Parliament of equal ability and influence, the Society cannot fail in accomplishing immeasurable good. The conception of the Society is due, we believe, to Alfred Roche, Esq, and when in full operation, is intended to embrace all classes of people at home and abroad, Governors and legislators of colonies, officials and non-officials, merchants, agriculturalists, in fact every class interested in colonial prosperity, from whom the information required can be drawn. Politics in an abstract form are strictly excluded from discussion before the Society. At the inauguratory meeting in Willis' Rooms, 4th July, Lord Bury and Selim Franklin, Esq, are stated to have made each an effective speech. All our local friends sojourning in London are joining the Society, so that for the future British Columbia will be well represented at home.

POSTPONEMENT.—We have been requested to announce that the usual fortnightly services in the First Presbyterian Church, Pandora street, conducted by the Rev. R. Jamieson; Nanaimo, are postponed until the 30th inst., in consequence of his having to officiate in New Westminster on Sunday first.

Masonic Ceremonies.

Yesterday morning the District Grand Lodge of England celebrated its foundation by attending Divine Service at St John's Church. The Order met at the Masonic Hall, Government street, about 11 o'clock, and marched to church, attended by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Scotland, and headed by the Volunteer Band, together forming one of the largest, and most imposing masonic processions ever seen in Victoria. The regalia of the different Orders were magnificent, but the Scotch generally were admired more than the English. The service was read by the Rev. T. P. Jenns, Rector of St John's, and the sermon preached by the Rev. F. Gribbell, Grand Chaplain of the Order. The Rev. gentleman took his text from 10th chap. of St Luke, 29th verse, and gave a sermon replete with those great truths of Christian charity appropriate to the occasion. The collection, after the service, amounted to $38, which, we understand, is to be devoted to the building fund of St John's Sunday School. The procession returned after the services at Church in the same order to their hall, and adjourned till half-past 2 p. m. At that time the Provincial Grand Lodge of Scotland was opened by the Provincial Grand Master of Scotland, Bro. T. W. Powell, to make arrangements in connection with their other Brethren, for laying the foundation stone of St. Andrew's Church. At a few minutes past three, the procession, headed by the band, with a guard of honor from the Volunteers, under the command of Adjutant Vinter, marched to the site of the new Scotch Church now being built, on the N.W. corner of Gordon and Courtenay streets. The narrow space of our columns will not permit of full report of the order of the procession. Besides the brethren invited to attend on the occasion, there were six Lodges belonging to the Colony, viz: The British Columbia No. 1187, E. R.; Nanaimo No. 1030, E. R.; Union No. 899, E. R.; Victoria No. 783, E. R.; Caledonia No. 478, R. S.; Victoria No. 783, R. S.; who bore the usual regalia, banners, &c. On arriving at the church, the ceremonies were opened with a prayer from the Provincial Grand Chaplain, Rev. Thomas Somerville, Pastor of the new Church, followed by the usual formalities of depositing coins, the scroll of the Church containing its history, the local journals, &c, beneath the foundation stone; with the singing of the Hundredth Psalm, and closing with remarks from the P. G. M., J. W. Powell, R. Wallace Esq., the Rev. Mr. Somerville, and His Honor Mr. Justice Needham. The attendance of ladies and families was large and respectable. In the evening the Order re-assembled at their hall, and sat down to a banquet which was served by Mons. Driard, of the Colonial; the Volunteer Band furnishing the music from a temporary platform erected on the outside. The evening passed off in the interchange of the most kindly feeling.

It will be gratifying to the craft no doubt to be informed how rapid has been the growth of Masonry in the Colony. A few of the brethren here in 1858 were the first to take steps to perpetuate Masonry in this part of the British Empire, as will be seen from the following extract: 'Victoria Lodge of F. & A. M. Preliminary measures have been taken for the establishment of a Masonic Lodge in Victoria, and the petition for a Charter will go to England next steamer. The following gentlemen have been named for office bearers; J J Southgate, W. M., George Pearkes, S. W.; Wm Jeffray, J. W.; A DeCosmos, Secty; James N Thain, Treasurer; W H Thain, S D; R J McDonnell, J D.—British Colonist, 25th Dec, 1858.' From this small beginning has sprang the important and imposing Order we witnessed in our streets yesterday.

THE NEW CREEK.—Peterson Creek which continues to create excitement in Cariboo, is situated about 18 miles west from Barkerville and empties into Lightning Creek about a mile below Beaver Pass. It is conveniently situated to secure supplies of provisions; is 10 miles long, 4 miles of which are staked off into claims. The discoverer had only gone in a few feet into the bench when gold was met, giving from three to four dollars to the pan. Some of the gold was purchased by the Bank, and one piece retained was worth about twenty-five dollars. The pay dirt is six feet thick, and it is presumed richer deposits will be found on the bed of the creek. It is believed a large extent of the ground on the creek is equally rich with the Discovery claim. The ground all through is highly favorable for mining purposes.

THE barkentine Free Trade will probably finish discharging her cargo by noon to-day; she will afterwards proceed to Port Ludlow to load with lumber for San Francisco.

LATEST FROM PETERS CREEK.—By Reid, the expressman, who arrived from Peters creek last night, we heard that three or four companies had got a prospect. The Cosmopolitan got $3 in two pans of dirt on shallow bed-rock in the creek and was erecting sluice boxes to wash. The Barkerville, the first below the Discovery, got 50 cents in a pan of gravel. The Discovery co had shaft in the tunnel and found dirt paying $2 to the pan. The bench claims immediately above and below the Discovery had indications of a back channel and good dirt.—*Sentinel.*

IMPORTS.—Value of principal heads of imports into the Colony of British Columbia for the Quarter ending March 25th, 1868: Boots and shoes, $40,028; butter, $13,151; candles, $18,597; cigars, $14,125; clothing, $113,520; drygoods, $73,399; flour, $22,772; beef cattle, $15,285; opium, $14,400; sugar, $38,427; spirits, $23,566; tea, $18,499; tobacco, $18,910. Total amount from *Government Gazette*, $632,978. It will be seen there is still reason for increased exertion on the part of our farming and stock-raising class; for instance, the quantity of butter, flour, beef, &c, continue largely to be brought in.

POLICE COURT.—William Lockhart charged with being drunk and obstructing the thoroughfare, forfeited his bail by failing to put in his appearance at the proper time. Jim, a Hydah, became a *hide her* in another way, by pummelling Miss Jenny of the same ancient clan and each afterwards lodged a complaint of assault one against the other. Mr Jimmy was fined $10 or in default of payment, one months' hard labor; Miss Jenny $5 or 14 days imprisonment. This Hydah tribe seems a most rascally set, for some of them are always before the Court.

HARVESTING.—The farmers on the Bonaparte and the Thompson river are busy harvesting their grain, and are in need of laborers, who seem to be very scarce in that section. Their crops are remarkably heavy and are being harvested in good condition. At the Junction and above, farmers have not commenced to cut their grain, but are all busy in getting up their hay, which is abundant. Laborers refuse $2 and even $3 a day.

PRESBYTERIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC.—The Nanaimo Presbyterian Sabbath School picnic took place on Tuesday last. A very pleasant and agreeable day was spent on Protection Island by a large number of parents and members of the congregation, and other friends, in company with the children.

RESERVED.—The tract of land (20,000 acres) situated on the south side of Skiddgate Bay, Queen Charlotte Island, is again reserved until further notice. It was formerly held under prospecting right by the Seymour Coal Company.

CRICKET.—The return match between the married and single eleven of this city will take place to-morrow; wickets to be pitched as before at 12 o'clock. The players are desired to be on the ground as punctually as as possible.

Cariboo Mining Intelligence.

(From the Cariboo Sentinel.)

WILLIAM CREEK

Owing to the scarcity of water, our report this week will fall short of last week, especially on the upper portion of the creek. The Steadman, McLaren and Tyack co.'s did not wash up at all last week. The wash ups are as follows:—The Wilson co. 45 ozs; Dutch Bill co. 33 oz; Six-toed-Pete co. 12 zo; Taylor co. 35 oz; Cornish co. 73 oz; Flume co. 60 oz; California co. 10 oz; Barker, 42 oz; Sheepskin, 18 oz; Baldhead, 20 oz; Welsh, 13 oz; Aurora, 48 oz; Cariboo, 33 oz; Lillooet, 40 oz; the Good Hope are making $12 per day to the hand; Mosher, 28½ oz; the Miners' Flume washed up yesterday 65 oz.

CONKLIN GULCH

This creek is looking up again. The Reed co. washed up last week 163½ oz; Renfew co 27 oz; Lone Star co. have got through the slum and are approaching bed rock; and from present indications, they are sure to get a portion of the lead now being worked by the Reed and Renfews co,'s.

STOUT GULCH

The Mucho Oro co, cleared up last week 62 oz; Jenkins co. 40 oz; Taftvale co. 85 oz; Alturas co, 9 oz; Floyd co. 44 oz.

M'ARTHUR GULCH

The Try-again co. and the New Brunswick co. are still taking out good pay.

MOSQUITO CREEK

The yield of gold from Mosquito and Red Gulch has fallen off during the past week owing to the scarcity of water. We have failed to obtain a full report from that locality this week, and can only give the wash ups of three claims. The Minnehaha took out 206 oz; the Hiawatha, 28 oz; Tipton Slasher, 24 oz; Point co. have got a good prospect in the hill, and the United has also struck better pay. The Tabb co. are approaching the back channel on the lead which the Point company are looking after.

LOWHEE CREEK

The Calavaras co. pays steadily at the rate of 150 oz. per week.

CANADIAN CREEK

Five companies only are now working on this creek. The Clear Grit is taking out a little pay. The Miller, Mayflower, Gem and New Dominion, are jointly running a tunnel through the Clear Grit ground, at an expense of $500 per week. All the claims on the upper portion of the creek are laid over far the want of water.

GROUSE CREEK

Accounts from this creek are most cheering. There are about ten claims doing well, three of which are paying largely. The Flume co. washed up for the week 246 oz; the Carolina, 150 oz; Ne'er-do-well, 101 oz. The Hankin co. has got a good prospect in the gravel in the vicinity of the old Heron claim. The palmy days of Grouse creek evidently are not over.

GAYET RAVINE

The French co,'s on this ravine, at the foot of Grouse creek, are making good, steady pay, and it is said some of them have accumulated a large amount of gold. The ground is believed to be rich, although the parties working it have no disposition to report it as such.

RICH GULCH

William Moore, in running a drift from the bottom of his shaft, got a prospect of $16 on a piece of bed rock two feet square. The claim looks very favorable.

WANTLER CREEK

There is nothing new from this creek. Some three companies are making pretty good pay.

KEITHLEY CREEK

The Stonewall co. have struck a big prospect, as high as $1½ to $2½ to the pan. The Baxter co. not on pay now; are running a new drift. The Cascade, Martin and Tournier co.'s are all paying over wages. Three China co's are also making good pay. The Grotto co. are taking out large pay. This company have run 600 feet of a tunnel, and before their ground is worked out they expect to run 1000 feet more tunnel. They can profitably employ 100 men.

ANDERSON CREEK

Discovery co. hydraulicing. A party of cornishmen have taken up the ground adjoining and above the Discovery, and commenced running a tunnel into the right bank.

PETERS CREEK

Excitement still exists. The Discovery co. lost the bed rock, which has pitched into the hill. Barkerville co., creek claim, sunk and bottomed two shafts, one with the rock pitching into the creek, the other with rock falling into the hill. Blythe & Co., hill claim, adjoining and above the Discovery, are running a tunnel; no rock yet. Butcher co., hill claim, sinking. Albion, hill claim, sunk several holes, rock shallow, no prospects. Many other companies are sinking and drifting, and every hour a new strike is expected; yet the general opinion is that it will be a difficult lead to find. The creek is staked off from head to foot, hills and all.

Supreme Court.

[Before His Lordship Chief Justice Needham and a Special Jury.]

WEDNESDAY, August 19th, 1868.

Chun Tan, trading as Tai Soong & Co., *vs.* William Sublette.—This was an action brought to recover the value of a box of opium taken by the defendant from the premises of the plaintiff, on Cormorant street, and damages for tresspass committed by the defendant on the said premises. It appeared in evidence that on the 11th day of November, 1867, the defendant came to the store of the plaintiff in company with Henry Thain and Sergeant Bowden of the Police force, and took away a box of opium which the defendant alleged was his property. The case occupied all day, and a number of witnesses were examined, and after a very impartial and able summing up by His Lordship, the Jury, after an absence of a few moments returned a verdict for the plaintiff upon all the counts. Damages $455.

THE U. S. Revenue Cutter Margaret Capt. Harris, from Astoria, arrived here yesterday afternoon, on her way to Sitka.