

## The Weekly Colonist.

Tuesday, September 27, 1864.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

FRIDAY, SEP. 23.

Council met at 3 p. m. Present—The Hon. the President, Colonial Secretary, Attorney General, Treasurer, and Hon. H. Rhodes.

## DIRECT STEAM COMMUNICATION.

The hon. Col. Secretary in pursuance of notice of motion introduced the above subject. He said the importance of the Governor's message was so great that little remained to be said on that score. His Excellency had gone fully into the matter and travelled over the whole ground. The present system was, beyond a doubt, most seriously defective. Two or three steamers had recently arrived bringing only a few English letters each trip, and it was most important that a settled system should be inaugurated, no arguments were necessary to convince anyone of the necessity. The profits of the present line of steamers from Panama were inconceivably large, and it was to be hoped before long a British line would be placed upon the same route to share some of the benefits and give us greater mail facilities. The profits of the Panama line during three months of 1863 amounted to £1,000,000. The receipts of merchandise by the same line in 1862 reached 18,000 tons.

## Hon. Mr. Rhodes—English goods?

Col. Secretary—Partly so I presume, and partly from New York. A large field of profit was estimated from the conveyance of treasure. The yield of the various gold and silver mines in British Columbia, Oregon, California, Mexico, and elsewhere on this coast, was about £12,000,000 per annum, two thirds to three fourths of which went to England direct, and there was every reason to suppose that if a line of British steamers existed they would have the carrying of that gold. The subsidy was the chief difficulty with which they had to contend. From £25,000 to £30,000 would be the amount required to subsidize a line of steamers to Panama. It was a large sum and he felt satisfied that the two colonies could not contribute more than a fractional part of that sum towards the undertaking. Vancouver Island, he would however undertake to say, would contribute as liberally as her means would permit.

The revenue from the transmission of letters and papers had hitherto not been large, but there was no doubt that there would be a material increase visible as these Colonies became more settled up and their resources more developed. He found that the total number of letters for the past year sent by way of Panama amounted to about 20,000 and the papers 18,000, the revenue being something under £2000. The rates of postage on letters to England via Panama had been decreased to the same rates as via New York. On newspaper rates he was not so clear. Papers bearing a smaller postage came via New York rather than via Panama. The latter, which was at present 4d. would have to be reduced to 2d. The present subsidy was £2000 per annum, at the rate of \$9000 per annum, in addition to which there was practically another payment or loss to the revenue of \$80 per trip or \$240 per month. By way of inducement, these steamers had been always exempt from duties on cargo.

The hon. gentleman went into statistics of the loss sustained by the Exchequer by the present mail arrangements, and showed that during eight months of this year it had been practically \$3,270.

The extension to China and Japan was also an important feature in the contemplated scheme, and must necessarily be advantageous to the Colony.

Under the present system, moreover, we had no means of carrying books. The establishment of the project of mail steamers, which great accommodation which was enjoyed by the Australian and other British Colonies.

The hon. gentleman did not consider that it was in the province of the Honorable Council to deal just now with the pecuniary part of the question, but he thought they should aid the Governor in getting proper and regular steam communication by a direct British line, which would save at least a fortnight to the time occupied by the present mode of conveyance. There was no Colony under the Crown that did not receive assistance by a subsidized line of steamers, and with proper representations that assistance might reasonably be expected from her Majesty's Government; and he believed that when granted it would be commensurate with the advantages which the measure would unfold. He thought it desirable that the Hon. Council should adopt some resolution, to show his Excellency that they were desirous to assist him in carrying out the proposed scheme, and he had therefore much pleasure in moving the adoption of the following resolution:

That this Council having had under consideration the message of His Excellency the Governor relative to postal communication with England, is of opinion that it will be most desirable that His Excellency should communicate with the Government of British Columbia with a view to obtain the co-operation of that colony, and in order to ascertain what amount that colony would contribute towards establishing a British line of steamers between Panama and Vancouver Island; and further, that His Excellency should take such other steps as he might think fit to secure the important object in view.

The hon. Attorney General seconded the resolution, observing that he did not think it necessary to add anything to the remarks of the hon. mover. The money part of the question was the only difficulty in the way.

He could bear testimony to the high rates of postage on letters and papers and the great uncertainty which attended their delivery here. He had ceased to keep account of the numerous deficiencies and irregularities in the present system. Copies of the London Times, without number, had been forwarded to him and regularly perused in transit, and Punters, as a matter of course, never reached him (laughter). There was no doubt great need of reform in the postal system; we were at a remote distance from the parent country, in one of the only parts

of the world cut off from that direct and quick communication between friends and business men which was now a recognized necessity. People for want of proper communication were to a certain extent forced into the San Francisco market to procure goods which they would otherwise get from England.

The hon. President said the resolution expressed the opinion of the people of this colony on the Governor's message. That message went into a subject of vast importance to the entire community and to mercantile men especially. The present line afforded little accommodation; they looked to their own interests first and ours afterwards. He spoke of irregularities in our postal arrangements which came within his knowledge. The Times was regularly posted to him via New York, and yet he received only about one-fourth of them. Where they miscarried he did not know. Postage was charged upon them at the rate of 2d. Direct steam communication he thought would, without doubt, be highly advantageous. The Mexican ports on the Pacific, as his Excellency had stated, together with San Francisco, would be open to them. If his Excellency could get the Governor of British Columbia to join them in promoting the undertaking, aided by the local Legislatures, no doubt something practicable could be accomplished. He cordially supported the resolution.

The hon. Treasurer said he would lend his support to the resolution, but he thought it was not complete. A more deliberate expression of opinion on a matter of so great importance was desirable. It had never, he said, been considered whether we should follow the system of Great Britain in the carriage of letters and get a complete monopoly. We had never asked Americans to aid us, nor obliged them to do so. American mails had frequently passed through the colony and been transferred from one steamer to another without any impediment, which was of course a loss to the revenue. The hon. gentleman then referred to the carriage of letters by Express Companies, but was interrupted by the Hon. Colonial Secretary, who stated that Express letters passed through the Post Office.

The hon. Mr. Watson proceeded to state that the payment of £50 a trip to the San Francisco steamers was originally intended to draw colonization to these shores, but the object had entirely failed; and he thought we were paying £50 a month for nothing, when we did not even get our letters.

Hon. Mr. Rhodes—Have they been paid for those trips?

Hon. Colonial Secretary—The question has not arisen, but it may.

Hon. Mr. Rhodes said he would with pleasure support the resolution, but thought a slight alteration advisable. Governor Kennedy should be requested, he thought, to communicate in the first instance, with the Governor of British Columbia, and desire his co-operation. He thought the Hon. Col. Secretary had drawn too favorable a picture of the amount of traffic on the line.

Some discussion here took place regarding the system of carrying letters by Express. Mr. Rhodes said the Express gave great facilities for the carriage of letters to and from San Francisco.

Hon. Colonial Secretary said the Express arrangements had nothing to do with the present question; they paid postage on all their letters. He had omitted to refer to one point, and that was the present system of communication wholly precluded immigration, as the passengers could not be taken on board until they had been landed at the wharf, and he thought it desirable to import as much British blood as possible into the Colony.

The hon. gentleman then amended the resolution by inserting the words placed between brackets, and the resolution on being put passed unanimously.

The Council then adjourned.

## FROM THE EXPLORING PARTY.

Letter from Corporal Leech.

The following interesting letter from Mr. Leech, furnishing particulars of his journey across the island to Alberni, has been received by the Exploring Committee. We regret that the exploration of that portion of the island has been so far fruitless:

ALBERNI, 20th Sept. 1864.

Returning to the steamer Thames leaves for Victoria this morning. I take the opportunity of reporting the arrival of myself and party at this place.

In accordance with instructions received from Dr. Brown I proceeded with my party up the Nainimo river to a point where it forks, one fork coming from the South West and the other, which is the principle source in the west, the latter having its source in a small lake which is connected with another by a narrow strip of running water about a mile and a half in length. The second lake is fed by a stream flowing from the westward through a wide open valley not very heavily timbered, the timber consisting of cedar, Douglas pine, maple and alder with an underbrush of berry bushes. There seems to be some very good land in this valley.

The timber on the shores of the lake is excellent. The first section of this road, comprising the contract given to Mr. G. B. Wright, is completed, and has been accepted by the Government agent. An arrangement has been made by which the contractor will keep the road in a state of repair till July next. A trail has been constructed, making a junction with the original road, which is also being materially improved so as to answer all purposes for the present, as the remaining portion of the wagon road will not be gone on with just now.

To the eastward between the Nainimo and Chemainus rivers there is an extensive plain heavily timbered. I should have examined this valley but the shortness of my provisions at the time would not justify me in separating my party as Dr. Brown intended that I should have done; however I have no doubt but there is good agricultural land in this plain. Continuing our journey in a southwesterly direction we struck the head waters of the river Amnuchin, which we followed to its mouth near the west end of Cowichan Lake. There is some excellent timber, white pine and hemlock, on this river, but it is difficult to access.

From the west end of Cowichan Lake we proceeded due west to Barley Sound, which we struck at the mouth of Sarita river in Nu-mu-mis Bay, having crossed four distinct ranges of mountains varying in altitude from two to three thousand feet. We also

crossed the Nitinat river which here flows through an open valley, heavily timbered with spruce—underbrush of berry-bushes—and two other good sized streams flowing through very fine valleys, in which I believe there are considerable patches of good land.

The Sarita river has its source in a small lake, about 3 miles in length and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a mile wide, it is fed by a stream flowing from the E. N. E.

Where this stream enters the lake a delta of about (1000) one thousand acres is formed—could be very easily cleared and made available for agriculture, as would also the valley through which the Sarita river flows.

We left Nanaimo on Monday, the 15th August, and arrived in Nu-mu-ker-mis Bay on Wednesday, the 7th inst. Our provisions got so low on the 28th August that we were obliged to put ourselves on short rations. On the morning of Sunday, the 4th inst., we started on our last bit of bread at a place which we have called Hungry Creek. On Monday morning we camped on the bank of the creek, and most of our personal effects, finding ourselves too weak to carry them. On Tuesday, about noon, we struck the Lake at the head of Sarita river, where we caught five small trout, of which we made some delicious soup, travelled round the northern shore of the Lake, and camped at nightfall, where it discharges into the Sarita river. On Wednesday after a good breakfast of trout we proceeded down the river by a good trail, came upon an Indian lodge, about half a mile from the Lake, an old Indian and his squaw were the only inhabitants. I bargained with the old man to take the party in a canoe to the sea for six dollars.

About two miles further down the river we came to another lodge, where there were about six men with their squaws and children belonging to the Ojibwa. They received us very kindly and gave us plenty of boiled fish. Here I bargained for a canoe to take us to Alberni, where we arrived on Thursday, the 8th inst.

On Tuesday last I took Mr. Buttle and two Indians and went back to the place where I made the cache, and found everything returned to Alberni yesterday at 6 p. m.

Prospected for gold in every stream; merely found the color in the Nainimo river and Hungry Creek, but did not find even that anywhere else.

Although the country abounded with deer and elk, and our hunter is a good shot and had been hitherto very successful, yet we were so unfortunate as not to be able to kill a single deer from the time we left the Nainimo river.

Dr. Brown and party have not yet arrived.

I am, Sir, Yours obt. servt.,

O. J. LEACH.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA.

(From the Colonist of the 24th.)

RETURNED MINERS.—One hundred and thirty miners arrived in town yesterday, 30 having come on the Reliance from Yale and 40 on the Henrietta from Douglas.

ARRIVAL OF TREASURER.—About \$50,000 in treasure came down yesterday, U. Nelson Esq., of Douglas, having \$20,000, Dicks & Nelson's Express \$30,000; the balance being in the hands of miners.

THE RIFLE DRILL SHED.—The contract for erecting the drill shed for the New Westminster Rifle Volunteers, has been awarded to Messrs. Bonson & Richards for the sum of \$1068.

CARRIED.—There is no later news of importance from the mines. The steamer Cariboo Express had not got in to Yale when the Reliance left, but will probably arrive to-morrow.

CUSTOMS RECEIPTS for week ending Saturday, Sept. 17th, 1864.—Duties, \$263 16; harbor dues, \$38 5 2; head money, \$9 8; tonnage dues, \$69 2.

NAVY MOVEMENTS.—Her Majesty's ship frigate Sutil and gunboat Grappler were expected to leave the inlet last evening. His Excellency Governor Seymour gave an entertainment at Government House in honor of Admiral and Mrs. Denham, on Wednesday evening, and on the following day the party, prisoners believed to be at Williams Lake, gave an entertainment on board his flag-ship.

THE CHILCATEN EXPEDITION.—Although the Governor received dispatches from Mr. Brew on Tuesday, our information is very meagre. Mr. Brew and his party were, at last accounts, going to meet Amnuchin at his frigate Sutil and gunboat Grappler were expected to leave the inlet last evening. His Excellency Governor Seymour gave an entertainment at Government House in honor of Admiral and Mrs. Denham, on Wednesday evening, and on the following day the party, prisoners believed to be at Williams Lake, gave an entertainment on board his flag-ship.

THE BANK ROBBERY.—A reward of \$1000 is offered for information which will lead to the apprehension and conviction of the person or persons who committed the robbery on Macdonald & Co.'s bank, and \$2000 on the recovery of the whole of the stolen property, or in proportion for any less amount that may be recovered. The numbers of the notes are known and their payment stopped.

THE COD FISHERIES.—We learn from the master of the schooner Langley, just returned from the North West, that the seas round the north end of this island and in the vicinity of Queen Charlotte abound with cod-banks, and that the fish are now extremely plentiful. He says one thousand barrels of codfish might easily be taken in one month near Neerity. The cod fishing season begins this month. Without doubt these northern waters contain a mine of wealth far surpassing either Sooke or Cariboo.

COPPER DISCOVERIES.—Mr. Charles Baranowitch, owner of the schooner Langley, returned last night from Queen Charlotte Island, where he has been prospecting for copper for some time. He informs us that he has discovered some very promising veins, and brings down with him a quantity of excellent specimens of ore, some of which he believes contain a percentage of silver.

ARRIVED AT LAST.—The long expected Government Dredging Machine arrived yesterday by the John Stevens, from London, in charge of two Engineers.

THE GUNBOAT GRAPPLER sailed at Nanaimo on Saturday, and proceeded on her way to Metlakatlah with Mr. Duncan and Dr. Walker on board.

## ANOTHER BURGLARY.

About half-past one o'clock this morning the store of Mr. Solomon, in Yates street, was entered by burglars, who were in the act of bundling up a lot of clothing when the night watchmen, McGee and Levy, happened to pass, and on hearing an unusual noise inside, went up and tried the door, which opened on being touched. The burglars, who were surprised immediately ran for the back-door, which they evidently had the precaution to leave open, and made good their escape. The entrance was effected by wrenching off the staple to which a padlock was attached.

## LOCAL INTELLIGENCE.

FROM SOOKE.—Mr. R. S. Cranford, of Cariboo, returned last evening from a visit to Leech river with a favorable opinion of the future prospects of our mines. Mr. Cranford prospected in the neighborhood of the creek with success, and purposes taking a claim in a locality which he anticipates will eclipse Leech river in the yield of gold. Some parties came down the creek yesterday morning reporting that new strikes had been made but the whereabouts was not then ascertained.

THE ALEXANDRA.—This steamer left the harbor somewhat suddenly on Wednesday evening, and several rumors were about yesterday as to her supposed destination. She cleared for New Westminster and from all we could gather we have no reason to suppose otherwise than that Captain Moore has gone to Fraser River, and will return so soon as certain arrangements of a pecuniary nature can be effected.

OFFICIAL DELAYS.—Complaints are made of the detention caused at the Treasury to tax-payers by the frequent absence of the Treasurer at the Legislative and Executive Councils. Only on Wednesday last a number of people were detained nearly two hours from this cause, the clerk being incompetent to sign their receipts. If the Treasurer must occupy a seat at the Council it would be well to give his clerk power to execute necessary business during his absence.

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.—By a notice in our advertising columns it will be seen that on Monday week the firemen will proceed to the election of a Chief and Assistant Engineer. For the first office the present popular Chief, Mr. John C. Keenan, is nominated, and is considered sure of re-election. For the second, Mr. John Kriemler, of the Deluge Engine Company, and Mr. Henry Pickett, of the same company, are in the field. Mr. Abbott, the present Assistant, declining to stand.

NEW FIRM.—We have received a circular from the new firm of Weissenburger and Schlosser, who have entered into business in this city as merchants and commission agents. These gentlemen represent the wealthy continental house of E. Erlanger & Co., of Paris, and refer to numerous well known English and European houses. We trust they will here find ample field for enterprise.

THEIR.—A Hydash Indian named Jack, was yesterday brought before Mr. Pemberton charged with stealing certain articles of clothing from the Anglo-American Hotel, and pleading guilty was sent for one month to the chain-gang. Charles Miller also pleaded guilty to stealing a coat of the value of \$10 from one Edward Webster on board the steamer Thames, and was held for sentence.

SANDSUM COPPER MINE.—The foreman of the Sandsum mine arrived down yesterday morning. He reports having obtained an excellent vein of ore about thirty feet down the old shaft opened by Mr. Smith, and is satisfied that by a little vigorous labor 40 or 50 tons of 18 or 20 per cent ore might be got out for shipment.

FROM NANAIMO.—The steamer Fidelity arrived last night from Nanaimo bringing two Indian prisoners charged with the murder of Thompson at Chemainus. Also a white man to undergo sentence for cutting and wounding at Nanaimo.

FROM SOOKE.—The steamer Caledonia arrived last evening from Sooke with 13 passengers, chiefly Chinamen. There is nothing new from the mines. Freight is still carried by the Caledonia and Culverwell's pack train to Kennedy Flat for  $\frac{1}{2}$  cents per lb. Maj. Foster, the Sooke Magistrate, had held his first court, three cases having come before him. One, a man named John Williams, was convicted of selling whisky to Indians, and was fined \$250 or 12 months imprisonment. He was unable to pay the fine and was consequently sent up to Victoria goal by the Caledonia. The other cases was of a trivial nature.

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MUTINEERS.—Three of the crew of the bark John Stevenson, alleged to have committed certain acts of mutiny and insubordination on board that vessel on her voyage from England, were landed shortly after the vessel arrived yesterday and lodged in jail. Three more of the men, who were sent on by steam vessel from Valparaiso, have not yet arrived.

THE EVENING GUN is now fired from the flag ship at eight o'clock.

## BRITISH FLAG-PLANTING.

It was not without reason and forethought that Franklin protested against the American eagle as a bird of bad habits, likely to get the Union into trouble. People would be astonished if they could see what favorite national figures of speech have cost our own country. The British lion was a most expensive beast, and never shook the dewdrops from his mane without some bad effect; and as for his roars, they would have made taxpayers roar too if they had known what they were about. Our wooden walls have served many a turn of extravagance, and as for the Balance of Power, the National Debt is only a part of its price. But not the least pertinent figure is planting the flag of England here and there and everywhere. Sydney Smith says there is not an ocean rock upon which a commandant can perch without a British Governor and garrison, and the Governor is always looking out for the opportunity of planting the flag of England somewhere else. When Governor Pine proposed to the Colonial Minister an expedition of \$9,000 man against Ahanabee, it was to enable him, as he wrote, "to march to Coomassie and there plant 'the British flag!' When the man wrote those words he thought he had made his scheme certain of acceptance, and that it was not in Ministerial nature to resist such a temptation. What a fine thing to plant the British flag at Coomassie! what glory, what an achievement for history and the envy and admiration of the world. Imagine the British flag planted in a negro group of wigwams in the centre of a pestilential forest. The plant would have cost thousands of lives by disease, and hundreds of thousands of money; but a flag's flag for all that, and to fly it in any strange, out of the way place is worth any price. So thought Governor Pine. The Colonial Minister ought to have replied that Paris, and refer to numerous well known English and European houses. We trust they will here find ample field for enterprise.

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