

PROVINCIAL NEWS

The Potato Patch War—Captain Atkinson Convicted of the Charge Against Him.

Matter to Come Before the Vancouver County Court—Some General Gossip.

News from the Behlson Party—Another Smelter Proposition for Vancouver.

New Westminster Exhibition Notes—News from Nelson, Trail and Sandon.

Steveston, Sept. 27.—The potato patch at present the centre of attraction here, and the conflict regarding it has passed through various stages since our last notice.

On Friday morning when the case against Captain Atkinson was called, Mr. Shoebottom appeared for Mr. Lafond, the informant, and Mr. Philip, acted for the defendant.

Captain Atkinson pleaded not guilty. Mr. Shoebottom said his client wished another magistrate to try the case, as he was informed that the stipendiary had been consulted in this matter by the accused.

Mr. Lafond was the first witness called. He said he had been the owner of block 21 since the 10th inst. He purchased the same from B. C. Land & Investment Company, and got immediate possession. He knew there was a crop on the ground, and one object of purchase was to obtain the crop.

Mr. Philip-Witless cross-examined by Mr. Philip-Witless did not remember saying to Captain Atkinson that the boys had asked him to tell the captain to leave. There were other persons interested in this property. He bought it and it is his own name. The price is \$1,200. His object was to get the whole of it; the land and the crop. He so stated to Mr. Lafond.

Mr. Philip-Witless cross-examined by Mr. Philip-Witless knew a number of the blocks were occupied and cropped this season. So far as he knew all are on the same footing. He did not know any other lot sold with a crop on it. He did not know who resided there.

Mr. Philip stated that there had not been a vestige of evidence led to support a charge of assault of any kind or degree. They had not before them any charge of trespass, and as regards the ownership of the crop on the land, that was not a matter this court could deal with. The law was clear on the subject, and it would be entered through another court. He asked that the case be dismissed.

recovered consciousness. To-day his condition was worse, and his recovery is not expected.

Surveyors are now engaged in platting the unsurveyed portion of the townsite. The contract was awarded to Smith, Deane & Co. of Rossland.

Trail, Sept. 27.—The last spike on the Trail-Rosban branch of the Columbia & Western was driven this morning in the presence of many spectators.

Mr. Sherwood is in the city, having come down recently from the Fort Steele country. Mr. Sherwood is owner of two important claims on Perry-creek, the Red Mountain and Badger mines.

Mr. Sherwood said last night: "Fort Steele is all right. There are some valuable properties there, and they are being worked. The North Star is working with a force of ten men, and the St. Eugene on Myrie river, is getting out one or two tons of ore."

Sandon, Sept. 25.—Sandon experienced its first fire last night, the dwelling house of N. McLean being the scene of the conflagration. Most of the furniture was destroyed, and the loss is estimated at \$1,000.

Mr. Sherwood reports that the Fort Steele mining exhibit for the fruit fair will be a good one. A. B. Grace, manager of the Fort Steele Prospector, has the exhibit in charge, and will arrive with it in Spokane in a few days.

Mr. Sherwood and two others came down the Kootenay river in a boat to Jennings, a distance of 160 miles, and were three days and a half on the way. Mr. Sherwood is now in Spokane.

Mr. Sherwood received that night: "Fort Steele is all right. There are some valuable properties there, and they are being worked. The North Star is working with a force of ten men, and the St. Eugene on Myrie river, is getting out one or two tons of ore."

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GARDNER WAS ANGRY

Exciting Scene at the Beginning of the Great Chinese Smuggling Case at Seattle.

Judge Humes is Given the Life by a Chinese Interpreter Well Known in Victoria.

The words came out with a snap, and from beneath the witness' dark eyebrows shafts of fire flashed out in an ominous sort of way.

The man in the witness chair who thus relieved the tension of his feelings was Dr. J. E. Gardner, Chinese interpreter and translator, employed by the treasury department to assist its special agents in ferreting out the guilty parties in the Chinese frauds at Port Townsend.

The questioner was ex-Judge T. J. Humes, who conducted a rather searching cross-examination on behalf of his client, Ching Gee Hee, while his associates, consisting of Messrs. Thomas Burke, R. A. Bullinger and Alfred Battle, contented themselves with offering suggestions along the line of examination.

Dr. Gardner was subjected to a most unpleasing series of questions from the defence for an hour and a half after his direct examination in the preliminary hearing of Gee Ching Gee Hee yesterday before Commissioner Kiefer.

Twice during the examination Dr. Gardner gave vent to the hot words quoted above. Then he was questioned by Whitehead to preserve his composure and to content himself with answering the questions put him. This the witness did thereafter, and the efforts of the defence to get him to make damaging admissions as to his own record or to confuse him as to the main points of his testimony were apparently unavailing.

Judge Humes' cross-examination covered a long range of subjects and a period of several hours. He asked the witness where he was born, if he had Chinese blood in his veins, and where he had lived during the past fifteen years. He led the witness back to the time of his birth in China, his residence there, his migration to Australia, thence to San Francisco and thence to Vancouver.

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WILL OPEN THIS WEEK

Merchants' Bank of Halifax Ready for Business at Rossland.

John R. Smith, manager of the local branch of the Merchants' Bank of Halifax, and W. Spencer, the accountant for the same bank, are here from Halifax, and will start the bank in two or three days.

Mr. Smith was seen last evening at the Allan House. He has the appearance of a conservative, though keen and sagacious business man of a thoroughly trustworthy type. He said: "I have not been here long enough to form an opinion of the city of Rossland and the mines around it, but it already strikes me that it is a lively business-like place, with a great future before it."

The Merchants' Bank of Halifax has a capital of \$1,500,000 and a surplus of \$100,000. It has over twenty branches in Canada, and is the largest bank in the Dominion.

The officers of the Merchants' Bank of Halifax are well known and prominent business men and financiers. The president is T. E. Kenny, vice-president is T. R. Ritchie, and the board of directors is composed of some of the leading business men of the city.

STRIKE ON WILLOW RIVER.

Cariboo Again the Scene of a Considerable Mining Excitement.

Clarence Coulter, who left Ashcroft, B. C., Saturday night, brings news of a very rich strike made on Willow river, about fifteen or twenty miles from Barkerville, in the old Cariboo district, which created almost as much furor among mining men in the '60's as does the inaccessible Clondyke now, says the P.-I.

The strike was made in bedrock by a Mr. Laird, formerly of Chicago, and a member of the publishing house of Laird & Lee.

Mr. Laird has a proposition worth many hundreds of thousands of dollars to him.

Mr. Laird commenced by sinking a shaft to a depth of about ninety feet, and then by the aid of a tunnel running a tunnel several hundred feet to a point under the old bed of Willow river, which is a tributary to the Fraser.

The gold at the bottom is very coarse, and as my impression is that Mr. Laird has a number of claims, which are peculiar to Canadian mining law, it is probable that his claim is not only very rich, but of large extent.

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wrongful seizure of his schooner in 1895. The two who have as yet not been paid are J. L. Thompson, a Norwegian, who was a boat steerer on the Beatrice, and C. Honley, a Swede, who was cook.

Mr. M. J. Hanev, who has charge of the construction work of the Crow's Nest railway, came over from the Mainland last evening. The work is being pushed forward rapidly and it is hoped that fully 100 miles will be completed this season and that the road will be completed by November, 1898.

Mr. James Barrett, who is a recent arrival in the city, has been from the Western Australia gold fields country of the impression already existing that even from that distant portion of the world there will be a large influx of prospectors to the coast.

After a lengthy stay among the Indians of Queen Charlotte islands in search of curios, relics and specimens of every description relating to Indian life, Dr. Newcombe returned to the Mainland yesterday evening.

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