

The Weekly British Colonist.

Tuesday, February 27, 1866

DIRECT AND INDIRECT TAXATION.

The debate yesterday in the House showed pretty conclusively the feeling of the Assembly on direct and indirect taxation. Out of a House of twelve members, nine, including the chairman, were in favor of the indirect system. All the claims of commerce, all the prophecies of ruin, all the personal denunciations proved unavailing, and the House deliberately decided that where one of two taxes had to be abolished, the repeal should rest on that one which was most difficult of collection and most obnoxious to the inhabitants. When the collision came between an indirect impost of one-half per cent on imported articles and a direct tax of one per cent. on real estate, which has been the most irksome of all our taxes, it was not difficult to foresee the result. In the one instance the tax is collected with so much ease and bears so lightly on the public, that scarcely a perceptible difference would be felt in its removal; in the other the burden is so intolerable that a large portion of it is pushed on to the shoulders of the succeeding year and another large portion is only paid when the property has been sold by the Government. A great deal has been said about the justice of making real estate owners contribute more than any other class to the revenue, and nobody disputes the principle; but it is one thing making a class bear its share of the general burdens, and another driving it into collision with the Government and throwing its property into endless litigation. The act might, it is true, be amended, but it would be like the Incorporation Act—it would require patching every session, and then cease to give satisfaction. The only course was a total abolition. When bills granting municipalities to the various districts shall have passed, a much simpler and much juster scheme will be devised for taxing real estate. The speculator, as well as the bona fide resident, will then have to pay his proper quota towards the construction and repair of roads, and the general government will be relieved of an expenditure that will bring its demands within a much more modest compass than at present.

There was, however, another question in yesterday's debate besides that of direct and indirect taxation—the question of commercial supremacy. If you retain the half-per-cent on goods coming to Victoria, said the supporters of the repeal of the act, you will drive our British Columbian trade to New Westminster. The movers in the matter, however, went a little too far; they were not satisfied merely with the abolition of the half per cent, but they wanted the cattle tax act repealed, and the permits on vegetables abolished, showing clearly that it was the old superstition about the free port that was urging them more than the dread of losing their trade with British Columbia. Of course we had the same dismal prophecies that were recited last year about the port being destroyed, and some other town rising up to dispute with us the trade of the neighboring colony, but as in that instance the predictions were sadly falsified, so in the present they are likely to come to naught. Did the facts really appear otherwise—did our prospects show the sombre hue, which some hon. gentlemen were pleased to give them, there is still a remedy to be applied to meet the urgency of the case, without destroying the most convenient of all our sources of revenue. It was suggested yesterday in the House that all imported merchandise exported to New Westminster should pay nothing to the revenue of the colony—that the half per cent. should be raised to one per cent, and the exported articles receive a drawback. This would afford all the relief required, and would not entail an additional expense on the colony of over \$2000, while at the same time it would be increasing the revenue three or four times that amount. The expense and the bother of such a system are more bugaboos; the scheme might be so simplified that the mercantile class would find it almost as easy to ship their goods then as now. If this class are sincere in what they say—that they desire only to be unimpeded in their trade with British Columbia—here is an opportunity which the Assembly offers them. We would advise them for the hundredth time to discard the idea of keeping the port of Victoria free—to relinquish a course that will sacrifice the substance for the shadow—the material advantages for an empty name. Let them, only meet the Assembly in a reasonable spirit, throwing aside prejudice and predilection, and we have no doubt they will find in the present House every assistance that a Legislature, anxious for the country's welfare, can afford.

THE WEATHER.—Nothing could exceed the loveliness of the weather that we have been experiencing for the past few days. Although the air has been cool in the shade, and keen and frosty at night, we learn that a spirit thermometer exposed yesterday to the sun's rays rose to 104, and then burst, and on being replaced by another the quicksilver rose to 100, when it was removed.

TELEGRAPHIC.

Special Dispatch to the "Colonist."

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.—John Ross, whose claims to the Chiefship of the Cherokees were ignored by the Crow commission recently sent out to form treaties with the hostile Indian tribes, yesterday held a long interview with the President; he is represented by members of the commission as possessing great wealth and living in a style of elegance unsurpassed by his eastern brethren. His visit to Washington is believed to be for the purpose of securing his recognition by the government as chief of the Cherokees.

Hon. L. D. Campbell, recently appointed Minister to Mexico, arrived in Washington yesterday, and had an interview with the President. He visits Washington on private business, and will return to Ohio in a few days and will remain until the Senate shall take action on his nomination as Minister to the Mexican Republic.

Major General Terry is expected in Washington to-day in answer to a summons from the reconstruction committee.

Judge Barrett, the Commissioner of the Pension Bureau, yesterday decided relative to the claim of a rebel soldier for land bounty, on the ground that he had rendered military service to the Government of the United States in the war of 1812, that by his participation in the war against the Union he had forfeited his title to any awards for services prior to the rebellion.

The Tribune's special says a private despatch in Washington from a prominent member of the Connecticut Union State Convention, states that the resolution recommending the early admission of Tennessee was voted down in the Committee on Resolutions.

The Tribune this morning publishes tables prepared from the reports of the Commissioners of Internal Revenue which show that the receipts of Internal Revenue for the year ending June 30, 1865, were \$211,129,529 17. The amount collected through the Collectors and Assessors was \$18,371,284 49. The expenses of collecting this sum was \$476,966 31.

The Times special says that there is much dissatisfaction among the army officers who have served with distinction in the war; that the Military Bill as last reported to the Senate makes no provision for the promotion of any of the officers who spring from the ranks of the Volunteers. Vigorous efforts will be made to secure this feature in the reorganization of the army.

New York, February 16.—The silk manufactory, No. 417, 419, and 421 West street, Hickman & Silverman's, was robbed of \$100,000 worth of goods on Wednesday night, by a party of burglars, who before commencing operations cut the watchman so severely that his recovery is doubtful. They left him in the street on the sidewalk.

New York, February 16.—The Committee on the relief of disabled soldiers and sailors held a meeting yesterday, and determined that Col. J. B. Harmon shall be the manager of the Soldiers and Sailors' Employment Agency, and that he be requested to commence a distribution of relief among the most needy soldiers and sailors on the 22nd inst., the occasion of the Anniversary of Washington's Birthday.

A train on the Erie Railroad, due at Jersey City at 4 p.m., yesterday struck a wagon loaded with timber which was crossing the track near Point Jarvis, instantly killing the driver of the team. The engine was considerably damaged and one end of the baggage car stove in, but no one on the train was injured.

QUINCY, ILL., February 14.—Snow fell to the depth of four inches last night. The river is again closed at this point.

INDIANAPOLIS, February 15.—A convention of Indiana soldiers was held to-day for the permanent organization of an Indiana State Soldiers' Asylum, with General Nathan Kimball as President. Resolutions favoring the equalization of bounties, and the establishment of a Soldiers and Seamen's Home in Indiana were adopted.

KANSAS CITY, February 15.—A bank robbery and a murder were committed at Liberty, Clay County, on the 13th inst. While the Justice's Court was in session, and the citizens generally were witnessing a trial, twelve robbers entered the town and robbed a Savings Association Bank. Bired, the cashier, and his son were forced into the vault of the bank and compelled to deliver up the funds amounting to \$72,000. Bired gave the alarm, and was shot by the robbers.

New York, Feb. 15.—The Winoski returned to the Navy Yard at 12:30 to-day. The race between the steamers Winoski and Algonquin was abandoned last night on account of the storm.

The Supreme Court has denied the application on behalf of the female sufferers by the Merced frauds for an injunction against the owners of the Continental.

The Post's special dispatch says the President has not yet signed the Freedman's Bureau Bill; it is understood that the subject will be considered at the next meeting of the Cabinet.

The Commercial's special says John Minor Borte has been examined before the construction Committee to-day.

H. E. B. Pollard had an interview to-day with the President to endeavor to get permission to publish the Richmond Examiner again.

The fate of the Bankrupt Bill in the House is doubtful.

NASHVILLE, Feb. 15.—General Sweeney and Col. Roberts arrived last night and were serenaded by a band. To-night they addressed the Fenian Brotherhood at the old theatre. Preparations are being made to give them a grand reception; the proceeds of the sale of tickets are to be applied to the purchase of arms.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15.—In the House, Mason of Iowa, from the Committee on Appropriations, reported a Bill making appropriation for the service of the Post Office Department for the year ending June 30, 1867, which was made the special order for next Thursday. Raymond, of New York, presenting a petition from the delegates representing the photographers of various sections of the United States praying for an amendment of the excise law relating to their business. Referred to the Committee

of Ways and Means. Raymond also presented the petition of James Hamilton and 50 others of New York city praying for the protection of American industry by a tariff on imports.

EUROPEAN.

New York, Feb. 15.—The London Sunday Gazette says the first reading of the Reform Bill will not be moved before the reassembling of the House after the holidays. The British Government issued another proclamation offering a reward of twenty-three thousand pounds for the capture of Stephens.

Seizures of fifty rifles and bayonets were made at Dundalk.

The intelligence that Chaudler's motion in reference to the Alabama claims and the recall of the American Minister had been lost in the United States Senate had no effect on change.

The official yellow book of France containing Drouyn de Lhuys' despatches to the Washington Cabinet on the Mexican question has been published, together with the despatch relating to Drouyn de Lhuys' conversation with Minister Bigelow, declaring all official controversy upon measures taken by Maximilian, and stating that he could only receive Bigelow's communication on that subject as information, the measure referred to being purely of administrative order. The Minister adds: "Relying upon the equitable spirit of the Washington Cabinet we expect from it the assurance that the American people will conform to the law of non-intervention which they invoke by maintaining a strict neutrality with regard to Mexico."

In Italy the Ministerial bill for the suppression of religious corporations has been distributed among the deputies. The revenues of Bishops are to be reduced. A portion will be conveyed to the communes. The Spanish Minister to Peru and the Consul at Callao have arrived at St. Nazaire, Lima, announcing that diplomatic relations between Spain and Peru have been entered into.

Several vessels bearing the Chilean colors appeared off Valparaiso pursuing the Spanish shipping. They are supposed to be pirates under the Chilean flag.

CALIFORNIA.

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 16.—The British barque Belshazzar was burned at sea in lat. 56° on the 24 December last. The officers and crew were rescued by the ship Anagninis and were landed at Callao.

The U. S. flag ship Lancaster, 30 guns, arrived this morning from Honolulu. She reports the safe arrival at Honolulu of the steamer Ajax.

The sloop of war St. Marys from Panama arrived this afternoon.

The steamer Active from New Westminster and Victoria arrived this morning.

Cleared February 16.—Barque Almatia, Portland. The Sierra Nevada sails on Tuesday next. The Pacific arrived to-day.

PRESERVATION OF "FRESH MEAT."—A year ago a private association was formed in England for the purpose of discovering the best method of supplying the markets of that country with fresh animal food from those parts of the world where, comparatively speaking, it is produced in excessive quantities and almost without cost. In consequence of the efforts of this association, a Mr. Richard Jones has, it is said, discovered a process, already patented, whereby beef, mutton, poultry, and other articles of the kind may be preserved in a fresh raw state for an indefinite period and under all circumstances of climate and temperature. The company has a well known and respectable board of directors to carry the patent into operation. Considering the high and continually increasing price of fresh meat in England, the invention is of great value. If the statements of the English papers are correct, the application of this discovery to animal food, thus preserved in the far West and brought to New York, where it could be safely kept and sold at any period of the year, is of great importance to the citizens of New York. Turkeys, quails, partridges and venison, killed at Christmas, and thus added to the larder; and cheap beef, brought fresh by this process from Texas, where it costs less than \$3 to raise a good four-year old steer, would confer immense benefits upon every class of the community. We find no description of the method by which the preservation is effected. The capital of the company is \$100,000, half of which is already subscribed; and the owner of a large estate in Australia has offered to supply the company with meat of the finest quality at a penny (two cents) per pound.—N. Y. World.

THE FREAKS OF FASHION.—A Paris letter says: "Imagine a white dress stuck all over with real, though of course stuffed, love birds, the interstices being filled up with beetles—not the little beetles that we tread upon, nothing of that sort, but regular fine gold and green insects, such as we see in the growing darkness of a Neapolitan summer night. The birds rather remind one of Italy, too. They are like those warblers which we see there served up on polenta. Last year the female mind was the same about boots; heels like pees placed in the middle of the foot, and so high that even the dirt of Paris asphalt did not soil the wearer. This year the madness has reached the brain, and lunatic bonnets are the natural result. Bonnets? How can that be a bonnet which has no crown, no front, no back? It must be 'nothing' like Sheridan's celebrated 'footless stocking without a leg.'"

A NOVEL WILL.—A novel will case has just been decided in the New York courts. The will in question was made in 1863, by one Charles Breusing, formerly an extensive music dealer in New York, translated from the German, in which it was written.—When I die, Regine Kaufman, of Handbiersheim, shall have all I leave behind me. It was properly signed and attested. The father and sister of the deceased contested the will on the ground that it was a forgery. The legatee had lived with the testator as his wife, but there was no positive proof that they were married. The Surrogate refused to admit the will to probate, but on appeal to the Supreme Court the decision was reversed. A large amount was dependent upon the decision.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, February 20.

Council met at 2:30 p. m.—Chief Justice presiding. Present—Hons. Colonial Secretary, Attorney General, Treasurer, D. Fraser, H. Rhodes and R. Finlayson.

INDIAN LIQUOR BILL.

This bill came up for a second reading. The Chief Justice at great length and in a forcible manner opposed the whole tenor of the bill; it was attempting a system of legislation that had failed in every other country. England, with her well organized system of excise and police, and with the addition of her navy, had found it impossible to prevent illicit trade, and had abandoned the policy, and were relying upon the principles of free and unrestricted trade. He (the Chief Justice) thought the clause authorizing corporal punishment as barbarous in the extreme, and if the bill passed in its present form it would disgrace the statute book—it was a step backward in the history of civilized legislation, and rather than enforce such an obnoxious punishment he would resign his seat upon the bench; he did not know an instance in the history of the world where flogging was inflicted for any such offence. He considered it better for the Indian and better for the trade of the country that the liquor traffic should be free, but if restriction in any form was applied it would be better to exact a heavy duty upon the articles, which, in the meantime would add to the revenue of the colony.

His Lordship was reminded by several hon. gentlemen of the Council that the free trade policy of the colony would not admit of such a mode of increasing the revenue, nor was it the province of the Council to inaugurate such a measure.

His Lordship saw great difficulty in enforcing such a bill with the very insufficient magisterial and police force existing in the colony, particularly as that force had just been materially reduced, and he was firmly of the opinion that it would be better to withhold all legislation upon the matter and let the Indians buy their experience, if they drink too much and get the head ache, they will drink less next day.

The Hon. Colonial Secretary at some length urged the necessity of the bill. He said it was a matter of practical experience and not one of theory. Every crime that had been committed by Indians had been induced by liquor. The Indian became a madman when under the influence of whiskey; it was true that it was impossible to entirely suppress the sale by enactment, but the present statute, although quite improper, had checked the traffic and had confined it to a few men. No new faces were to be seen in the chain gang, but the same old ones repeated. In regard to the abhorrence with which his Lordship the Chief Justice had viewed the punishment of flogging, he (the Colonial Secretary) would say that the people of England were not horrified a few days since at the spectacle of flogging for garroting, and he thought the crime of selling whiskey to Indians far greater than that of garroting, and deserved a punishment nothing short of hanging.

The Hon. Mr. Fraser said it was an exceedingly difficult matter to legislate upon. He had had his fears about the practicability of the present bill, but the Government were anxious that a bill more stringent than the Act now in force should be passed. He did not wish to oppose them; he, however, did not think it possible to enforce the Act unless some additions were made to the present magisterial and police forces, and he had been told by the Colonial Secretary that the Government would make such provision for carrying out the law. As regarded the flogging clause, he did not altogether like its moral aspect; but as to its severity, he thought hanging none too good for a man who would sell whiskey to Indians, for it was well known that when they were under the influence of liquor they were more like wild beasts than human beings, and if a white man who had incurred their displeasure escaped their vengeance, the first white man they met fell a victim to their savage hate and cruelty.

The Hon. Attorney General said the Indian was peculiar and the laws that applied to white men would not apply to them, he therefore thought extreme measures justifiable and necessary.

The Hon. Treasurer said the first thing an Indian did when he got drunk was to use his knife; a white man when he got drunk the most he might do was to whip his wife, but when the Indian got drunk he put his knife into the first white man he met, or perhaps his squaw; he was for the bill as it stood.

The Hon. Mr. Rhodes had seen the good effects of a restrictive liquor law in the Sandwich Islands; there the natives were very much superior to the Indians here, and when sober were peaceable and honest, but when under the influence of liquor were very savage and uncontrollable; the law there however worked well and the condition of the natives had been very much improved by it.

The Hon. Mr. Finlayson said it was his firm conviction that it would be better to allow the Indian to take his shilling and purchase his liquor freely and where he pleased, it was an impossibility to stop the sale of liquor to Indians and the more restrictions that were put upon it the more they would try to get it; he did not think there would be so much drunkenness and disorder if the sale was open and free and he thought it would have a tendency to elevate and civilize them by bringing them in social contact with the whites.

The Hon. Colonial Secretary thought it a matter of doubt as to their civilization. His Lordship the Chief Justice had seen on the banks of the Mohawk Indians civilized and riding in their carriages.

On motion of the Hon. Col. Secretary the bill was recommitted to add a clause to make liquor found in possession of Indians liable to seizure, and also to reconsider the clause relating to corporal punishment.

The Council went into Committee of the Whole, the Hon. Mr. Rhodes in the chair.

On motion of the Hon. Colonial Secretary a clause was added making all liquors found in the possession of Indians, liable to seizure and forfeiture to the Crown.

The clause relating to corporal punishment was retained and the bill reported as complete and passed a third and final reading.

HOMESTEAD BILL.

At the suggestion of the Hon. Attorney General the consideration of the Homestead bill was deferred. Council adjourned until Friday next at two p.m.

POLICE ASSURANCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BRITISH COLONIST.—SIR,—A person who had some tools, &c., stolen from his premises last night, applied to the police office this morning for assistance to search for the things. Messrs. Welch and Wilmer informed him (the messenger who related the following to me) that if he could get any clue to the whereabouts of the property an officer should be sent. So far so good; but they directed him to Inspector Hankin, who said that if the property was found and if the Indians, who it is supposed committed the burglary, would not give it up, he would send an officer; he further stated that he had lately had some twenty applications of the same kind, but he could not attend to them; that the police were taken away (and now mark!) but perhaps Mr. McClure or Mr. DeCosmos might send a man to search! The words in italics require no comment. The language implies that he will take very little trouble about such matters; but, Sir, the public who pay for protection, whose servant he is, not Governor Kennedy's, will cause him to face the music and give an account of the disposal of the force under his control. The sneering answer of the Inspector is impertinent and leads to a conclusion which many have long since come to—"that the right man is not in the right place." If the force is inefficient, numerically, why not show cause to the Chief, he has ordered that all reports should be made to him. The representatives of the people think that the force is sufficient if properly worked; but it is not; if the officers are to be paid specially for trapping Indian whisky sellers, and one of them will have to be set apart for the whipping post or the cart tail where the wretched trafficker in the "fire water" is to be flogged! according to the Legislative Council's law. It is well known that Mr. Hankin "is not up to trap," that he is deficient in the knowledge required for the position he has been placed in. An Inspector must know a thing or two. He should know that a man cannot enter and search for stolen property without a warrant; has not his limited experience taught him that if a party in attempting to take his own goods that Mr. Pemberton would, as likely as not, say to the injured party "I cannot assist you, you have taken the law into your own hands, you should have sent for the police, you must abide the consequences." Mr. Inspector may talk about locking doors [in this case he was informed that the door was locked] but with bunches of skeleton keys to be had handy from locksmiths' windows, of what use are Yankee notions in the shape of locks? I leave, Sir, most respectfully to two efficient city members who have dealt so hardly with the active, intelligent, wide-awake Inspector to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest.

February 21st, 1866.

WATCHMAN.

HYU WHISKY AND FREE-FIGHTING AMONG THE NANAIMOS.—C. S. Nichol, Esq., J. P. was engaged for a considerable time on Friday afternoon in hearing a number of charges and cross charges of assault, preferred against one another by representatives of the Nanaimo tribe of North American Indians. The array of broken heads, slashed cheeks, incised noses, and exaggerated lips must have been truly refreshing to any of the disciples of Euclaius who happened to be present in the courtroom at the time of trial. The cause of the muss was, as usual, whiskey (plentifully and cheaply supplied as the Indians stated, by a man named Dick). The only wonder is that the affray did not terminate fatally to some of the combatants, for, judging from the weapon produced in Court (a huge club) and which had been liberally used in the melee, we think there are few white men's skulls but would have succumbed to so weighty an argument. His Worship bowed the disputants over to keep the peace towards each other, in \$10 each for six months.—Gazette.

FROM NANAIMO.—The steamer Emily Harris, Captain Frain, with sixty tons of coal for the Hudson Bay Company and a few passengers, among whom was Dr. Evans, arrived last night from Nanaimo. She brought the Gazette of Monday. Dr. Evans gave the first lecture ever delivered in the new Institute Hall on Friday evening last; subject, "Chivalry: its influence on European Civilization." The subject was skillfully handled and attentively listened to. The Gazette explains the circumstances under which the publication of Captain Greenleaf's card of thanks was refused in that journal; it does not place the captain's conduct in a very flattering light. Captain Franklyn's schooner, the Premier, has some fine spars on board cut by Mr. Peter Sabiston, as part cargo for the Sandwich Islands. Charles S. Nichol, Esq., J. P., was holding court; the police cases were principally charges against drunken swashes.

FROM COMOX.—The Nanaimo Gazette learns from a passenger by the Sir James Douglas that the Euclaius are encamped at Comox once more. The gunboat panic was only temporary, and abated shortly after the fleet disappeared. Whiskey, detachments, and rioting are the fashion, and obtain to a large extent, both amongst the Euclaius and Comox tribes. The notorious Seaweed Jim has lapsed into his old habits, and is now as great a reprobate and drunkard as ever. Potatoes and turnips are more plentiful at Comox this season than ever before. All that the farmers' now want is the means to ship those valuable esculents to a better market than Comox affords.

Lost.—Messrs. Janion, Green & Rhodes have received advices of the loss of their steamer the Kilanee, engaged in the Sandwich Island trade.

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