

The Colonist.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1898.

A PUBLIC MEETING.

The mayor has called a public meeting of citizens for Thursday next to discuss civic matters. It is hardly necessary for the Colonist to add anything to what it has already said as to the importance of this meeting. We urge a large attendance, and hope that it will be representative as well. By representative we mean that all classes of citizens should attend, those who own property as well as those who do not, those who work for wages and those who live on independent incomes. All alike are interested in having the city well governed. We hope that the meeting will be the beginning of a new departure in the history of Victoria.

KLONDIKE NEXT YEAR.

Mr. Thomas A. Davies, of Seattle, who has spent the summer in Dawson, was in Victoria yesterday, and, when asked as to the probable output of gold next year, said that he thought it ought to reach from eighteen to twenty millions. Mr. Davies thinks that fully twelve millions were taken out this year, of which between seven and eight millions were sent out of the country, the remainder being needed on the ground for business purposes. His reason for expecting a larger output next season is that more men will be at work, that they will be better fed and therefore can do more work, that they will lose less time because there will be no necessity of hunting for food and that there are better and a larger supply of the appliances required in mining.

This seems to be a business-like and common sense view of the situation. Mr. Davies does not say anything about the refusal of the mine owners to work their claims because of the royalty. He was very emphatic in regard to the fair treatment accorded United States citizens at Dawson. He said no distinction was made between nationalities and that he thought the feeling of Americans was generally one of very great satisfaction at the absence of any discrimination against them. When asked as to the reports touching the conduct of the officials, he said that he did not wish to be quoted. His own personal relations with the officials had been very pleasant and satisfactory. In this respect Mr. Davies is like many others. Having had a profitable and pleasant summer in the north he is not disposed to make things unpleasant for any one, even if he could do so. We mention what he says on this point, or rather that he declines to say anything, for the sake of showing how easy it will be for the government to remove whatever causes of complaint actually exist. If Mr. Sifton had appreciated the situation there need not have been any trouble at all.

Mr. Davies has the same complaint as every one else in regard to the postal service. It is fair to say that the unsatisfactory conditions existing in this respect are as much of a surprise to the postal authorities here as to any one else. The excuse offered at Ottawa, that an unexpected and unprecedented situation arose, will not stand investigation. Instead of the situation being unexpected, it was less acute than was anticipated. Not one-fifth as many people went into the Yukon as were expected to go there. Every one remembers that the estimates ran up as high as half a million. The government in many ways showed that it expected an immense immigration. Yet Mr. Mulock did substantially nothing to provide for the postal accommodation of the host. This defect can be readily remedied, and if it is, a very great cause of dissatisfaction will be removed.

In view of the ease with which all causes of complaint on the part of the Yukon miners can be removed, the government will be culpable in the extreme if Klondike next season is not one of the most contented, as it most assuredly will be one of the most prosperous, glories in the world. Only official blundering can prevent this.

TOWNSITE RESERVES.

By an act of the legislature passed in 1896 it is provided that if any land that may hereafter be purchased from the Crown is divided into town lots, one-fourth of the whole shall become the property of the government. This law and the policy of reserving townsites are matters which might very well receive the attention of the government and the legislature with a view to a change. Presumably the object of passing the statute referred to was to meet the popular clamor against townsite speculators, and the same reason explains the reservation of townsites. We are not sure that the former is not unjust and that both are not unwise. We are unable to see why the owner of land should be discouraged from clearing it up and converting it into a townsite. We have in mind instances in which men have established industries and in connection therewith built up thriving towns. If any man should attempt to do this on land obtained from the government of British Columbia since 1896, one-fourth of all the outlay and trouble, and what he would be put to the benefit of the province, which would not contribute a dollar towards it. His next door neighbor, who obtains his grant before 1896, could plot and improve his property without any such penalty, and profit by his more enterprising neighbor's energy. The idea which prompts the reservation of townsites from grants is that the government, and not individuals, ought to profit by town building. It is a phase of communism—right in theory perhaps, but ineffectual

in practice. If we were living under theoretically ideal conditions, laws founded upon fine-spun theories would be well enough; but in this practical age, it is wise to deal with things as they are.

The interference of the government in the matter of townsites is calculated to hamper enterprise, and anything which does that is injurious. Perhaps the world would be better if the speculative element could be eliminated from it altogether, although we do not look to non-speculative communities, such as Indian reserves or the South Sea Islands, for model social and industrial conditions; but British Columbia invites men of capital and energy, and it is not wise to discourage speculation. It is very true that some men make a good deal of money out of townsite speculations, but the general community gets the benefit of it. It costs heavily to put townsites on the market. Improvements have to be made; agents must be paid; extensive advertising must be done. Purchasers of the lots have an interest in seeing that something is done to make their property valuable, and although in many cases injudicious investors lose their money, on the whole the country does not suffer. Those who buy lots purely as a speculation can usually afford to lose what they invest, and those who buy intending to occupy their lots generally make useful members of the community.

We suggest that the law of 1896 ought to be repealed at the earliest possible day, and that the policy of reserving townsites from sale to individuals, and handing the lots through the Crown Lands department, ought to be acted upon within very narrow limitations. We can readily imagine cases in which it would be judicious to prevent a speculator from grabbing a townsite. Such a case would be one where the area available for building purposes at the terminus of a line of railway or a steamboat route is small, but as a rule we think it would be wise to interfere with individual enterprise as little as possible.

FRUIT PESTS.

During the last few years orchardists in the United States and Canada have suffered very much from insect pests. The loss has been so great in many instances as to completely deprive them of any profit. How greatly this is to be regretted can only be judged when we reflect that not only is fruit raising one of the most pleasant and, under favorable circumstances, the most profitable of industries, but that fruit as an article of diet is of the highest sanitary value, and its use is greatly increasing. Hence any thing which will have a tendency to discourage fruit growing will have a doubly injurious effect upon the country. The loss in the states of Washington and Oregon has been very great, but we were not aware that it has been as serious as is indicated by the following extract from the Oregonian:

Another serious fact in connection with the fruit industry here is that orchards almost everywhere are overrun with insect pests. Except in the Hood River district and in the few orchards of the coast country, the codling moth is universal, and in some instances possible to find a box of apples or oranges, even in our home market, free from annoying traces of insect life. So far as profit is concerned, the pest is a double and a pear grower have, for this cause, been almost a total loss. A fruit-grower operating at Eugene received last week an order for 200 carloads of apples, but was compelled to decline it with the statement that the fruit was not ripe and abundant or of finer quality, but that nearly all are infected with the moth. The Upper Willamette valley it is thought that not more than 50 out of a hundred of sound, merchantable apples are to be had.

British Columbia has been kept reasonably free from these pests, and this is undoubtedly due to the wisdom of the late government in adopting stringent regulations on the subject, and the efficient work of the Fruit Inspector in carrying the law into effect. The matter is of such vital importance that we urge farmers, gardeners and orchardists everywhere to co-operate with the authorities in keeping the ravages of these pests down to the lowest possible limit in this province. Our fruit is destined to become a very important source of income, and nothing should be left undone that will prevent such losses as are reported from Oregon.

CANADIAN MINERALS.

Gold will undoubtedly take the highest place in the mineral products of Canada during the year 1898. Last year it held the second place, although the output of the Statistical Year Book says that the figures for the year are subject to revision. The output of gold was given the first place with a value of \$7,286,257, with gold next at \$6,190,000. The gold output for 1898 must reach very closely to \$20,000,000, which is two-thirds of the total mineral output of the Dominion last year. The yield of silver in 1897 was valued at \$3,332,000, that of copper at \$1,501,690, that of nickel at \$1,396,000 and that of lead at \$1,396,833. Other metals were produced in smaller quantities, the largest among them being iron ore to the value of \$178,716, and these swelled the total metallic product to \$13,996,254. In view of the greatly increased output of gold, and the increases in copper and silver, we estimate that the metallic output for the present year will more than double this.

The value of the petroleum produced last year was put at \$1,011,546, which is nearly twice the average of the last preceding two years. The total non-metallic mineral product of Canada for the year is estimated at \$14,542,939, which is less than that of 1893 or 1894, but greater than any others during the history of the Dominion. The value of the whole mineral output of the country shows an increase of nearly 20 per cent. over the year of 1893, or over 27 per cent. a very gratifying gain indeed.

In regard to the coal mines of the Dominion the Statistical Year Book gives some interesting facts. Not including known but undeveloped sections in the far north, it is estimated that the coal area is 97,200 square miles. In Cape Breton the workable thickness of coal is put at from 25 to 60 feet, in Pictou at 70 feet and in Cumberland at 30 feet, and the estimate of available coal in Nova Scotia is 7,000,000,000 tons. The coal fields of Manitoba are said to have an area of 15,000 square miles, but the coal is all lignite. Anthracite is found distributed over an area of 50,000 square miles on the eastern slope of the Rockies, extending from the international boundary to the Peace river. The coal area in the mountains is small but the quality is high. The area of the Coast mines is put at 13,700 square miles. Nearly half the coal produced in Canada is exported.

The Nelson Tribune refers to the large quantities of goods received in Nelson from the departmental stores in the East and complains that the practice of shipping away for articles that can be purchased at home is injurious to the city. This is one of the questions which vex all new towns and are not altogether unknown in older communities. It is said that a good deal of money goes out of Victoria to pay for goods purchased elsewhere. Of course no one has a right to dictate to his neighbor as to where he shall buy his food and clothing. There are some people who believe they cannot get a good suit of clothes in North America and therefore send to England for them. Others send from motives of economy. Some people believe it is better to buy everything they can in some Eastern Canadian city. Everyone is familiar with the custom of buying little odds and ends, and sometimes something more substantial, when on an excursion to Seattle. In the long run we think such purchases are a mistake. It would be better to buy at home, because money sent abroad stays there, while money laid out at home stays here, or at least the profit on it does.

A correspondent objects to the manner in which the members of the Henderson Stock Company pronounce the word "isolate." They all said "isolate" and "isolate." He says that he heard Gladstone use the word once and he said "isolate." There is good authority for both pronunciations, and that first given is not American, as he suggests. Walker, who was the author of the second pronouncing dictionary of the English language ever published, and who flourished upwards of a century ago, gives "isolate" as correct. The American dictionaries give both pronunciations, and some of them express a preference for "isolate." The fact that Gladstone liked the pronunciation shows that it is warranted by a very high authority; but then it is said that Lord John Russell used to pronounce "because" as it was written "because."

The Columbia thinks that Mr. Turner created a false impression by his statement in regard to the \$30,000 paid to the parliament building contractors, and says that it was not paid by special warrants included in the list of special warrants submitted to the house. We thought that this was a mistake. The fact that Gladstone liked the pronunciation shows that it is warranted by a very high authority; but then it is said that Lord John Russell used to pronounce "because" as it was written "because."

It is said that the services of Miss H. Nuttall, typewriter at the Supreme court, will be dispensed with after the first of the present month. Miss Nuttall has been engaged in the above capacity for two years and five months, and has given complete satisfaction. One of the strong points insisted upon by the late opposition in keeping her in the public service was that she was a public servant, and as Miss Nuttall is the daughter of a gentleman who has been in the province since 1859, she would seem to be entitled to the benefit by the application of this principle, if any one is. If the government should see fit to reconsider its decision in this matter, or find some other suitable employment for the young lady, its action would meet with general approval.

The point is taken by the minority of stockholders in the Le Roi that the British American Corporation cannot hold a title to the Northport smelter. The law of the state of Washington authorizes foreign corporations to hold property, both real and personal, in the state, but certain provisions are made relating to the registry of the company and the appointment of an agent within the state. It is possible that the B. A. C. has not complied with the law in this respect or had not done so at the time of the purchase of the Le Roi.

We notice that Vancouver is moving for the establishment of new parks, which reminds us that nothing has yet been done to provide the northern end of this city with a pleasure ground. There are suitable areas there, which could probably be leased for a long term on favorable terms.

The remarks of the Nelson Tribune in regard to the Parliament Buildings Commission are very much to the point, and express what we believe is the general sentiment of the public.

The Province discusses suicide and concludes that it is an evasion of responsibility. It is quite sure about this. The question is as far from being answered as when Hamlet propounded it.

Professor Zsigmondy says that he has found out how gold nuggets are formed. If he can pronounce his own name he ought to be able to do anything. This is the process. You dialize a faintly alkaline solution of gold and then treat it with a formaldehyde which leaves it in a colloidal condition from which you precipitate a chloride of gold by the use of common salt. The process is delightfully simple, even if the description of it is not quite as intelligible as it might be. To most people the process would be quite as intelligible if the words were strung together in some other order. The value of this discovery consists in the fact that if you can discover any place where a faintly alkaline solution of gold is being acted upon by a formaldehyde, all you have to do is to run and get some salt-and you can precipitate nuggets. It is likewise true that if you can put some salt on a bird's tail you can catch it.

We think that too much stress is being laid upon what the London Times has had to say about the Yukon officials, that is to say, the weight attached to the utterances of that paper on the subject is out of keeping with its means of acquiring information. It ought not to be necessary to wait to see what the London paper will say before taking notice of what is going on under our own noses. We claim that statements appearing in reputable papers published in Canada ought to receive as much attention from the government as those that appear in the most celebrated journal in the world. We think the Times said was fully warranted, but the same thing has been said by Canadian papers before the Times ever heard of it. It is about time that Canadians ceased to look to London for guidance in matters about which they know more than can possibly be known there.

The estimated cost of the railway from Robson to Boundary is put at \$10,000 a mile. This is a good deal of money, but shows the character of the work. But it is interesting to note, as illustrating the advance made in railway building during the last quarter of a century, that the average cost of the Intercolonial railway per mile was \$40,000. Persons who have gone over that line, and remarked the extremely easy character of the country through which the greater part of it lies, will appreciate the comparison between the two.

The Province says that, if the sealing dispute is not settled soon, the prospect is that there will not be many seals left to protect. The Province ought not to have said this, because it is not true, and its publication in a Canadian paper is certain to be used to the disadvantage of this country. There is no reason to believe that the seals are decreasing in number at less than any great rapidity. Some persons claim that they are not decreasing at all, although they may be altering their habits to some extent.

Some of our Eastern exchanges are discussing whether spruce forests are exhausted permanently by cutting. The best proof that they are not is afforded by the experience of the Maritime Provinces, where spruce land can be profitably cut over at intervals of from ten to twenty years, according to the minimum limit in size permitted to be cut.

No one in Victoria will object to fair play being extended to the Yukon officials. What we want here is that justice shall be done all round.

ANGLO-SAXON HYMN.

God of the nations hear,
Do thou incline Thine ear,
Men of lands may pray,
Fared our lands may be—
Still one in us we pray,
Hear us to-day.
Men from each Eastern land—
Men from a Southern strand—
Men from the North—
Men who have parted good—
Feeling the touch of blood—
Kin—for the world's good—
May we stand forth.
God of the nations hear!
Fill us with Thine peace—
Guard Thou each heart,
Wide as the world our sway,
Which we have won to-day,
Grant that each nation may
Bear well its part.

Toronto, Oct. 22th.

VINDICTIVE PRESSMEN.

Louis Bertrand pleaded guilty in the police court at Montreal recently to a charge of violence to the pressmen of La Patrie. The cause of the trouble seems to have been the appointment of a new press foreman. Several of the pressmen did not like the newcomer, and looked upon him as more or less of an intruder. The management of La Patrie had been forced to make certain changes in the staff on account of the conduct of a few of the leaders, which had necessitated the dismissal of a number of the pressmen got together and promised a reward to a man named Louis Bertrand if he would so arrange the \$7,500 press that the papers would be spoiled for a day's issue. Bertrand accordingly unscrewed fifty of the bolts and opened four ink reservoirs in the big Goss press on which La Patrie is printed.

ALLEGED HUMOR.

Deacon Pewter—Don't see you at church of late, Mr. Noddie.
Noddie—No; the fact is it costs so much for the Mackenzie and Mann. Two per cent. that I've made up my mind I'll have to save my soul in some other way if I want to keep my body in a few years longer.—Boston Transcript.

An English paper says that the hat of a shopkeeper at Eton was blown away one day, and as he started in pursuit a black hen dashed out of the gateway. The shopkeeper, mistaking the hen for his hat, and all Eton was electrified by the spectacle of a hatless and breathless man chasing a large fowl. The hen was kept in the country, the cost of governing the Yukon, and to make up a big surplus it possible for Mr. Tarte's program of increasing expenditure. Though there were upwards of twenty thousand people in Dawson City, for whose protection and regulation a large force had to be kept in the country, the cost of governing these 20,000 people has to come out of some four or five thousand men actually engaged in digging for gold. The other fifteen thousand, many of them mere parasites on the mining industry, are untaxed.

Princess Eleonora, of Sayn-Wittgenstein, one of the medievalized semi-royal German families, has been sentenced to a month's imprisonment in jail and 300 marks' fine for spreading slanderous rumors about her brother-in-law, Count Kongsmark, which brought about his divorce. The sentence has been affirmed on appeal.

Current Comment

A RECORD MAKER.

Referring to the change in the Yukon staff, the Toronto World asks, "Who is going to replace Mr. Clifford Sifton?" When Mr. Sifton is willing to go, and even before, there will be scores of Liberal politicians ready to fill his place; and in spite of the Toronto Globe's elaborate attempts to bolster up Mr. Sifton's reputation, there are not many of the numerous aspirants who could make a worse blunder of the Yukon administration.—Montreal Gazette.

METALLIC INFLUENCE.

The Victoria Colonist is exposing some rank political jobbery in connection with the career and uprising of Hewitt Boslock, M. P. His "monetary influence" has brought up newspapers, and is accountable for his success as a "silver-tongued orator." Just how long the people of this electorate will keep such a man at their representative and how quickly his political heels will be turned down in their little deep-laid trap will be shown at the earliest opportunity, not later than next chance to vote.—Revelstoke Herald.

A STATESMAN'S MUSEUM.

Mr. Sifton, who is described by the Globe (\$1,500,000), and La Patrie (\$35,000) as the most powerful statesman of modern times, is bringing out a new batch of immigrants—"spirit wrestlers" from Russia. With his Galicians and his spirit wrestlers, Mr. Sifton is evidently instituting a museum of natural history in the Northwest.—Toronto Mail and Empire.

THUNDERER LOSES CASTE.

The London Times was accepted as a splendid authority on Canadian matters when it was speaking well of the bogus trade preference and the Mulock postage stamp discrimination. But now that it is after Brother Sifton it has lost its character in ministerial circles. From one end of the Dominion to the other the subsidized press is denouncing it. The old Globe hints at mendacity. Another British paper says it is working for stock jobbers. A third takes up the Farnell affair, and so the story goes on. Brother Sifton ought to remove the Times from the list of papers entitled, in virtue of servility and promptitude to defend frauds, to government advertisements, to the list of newspapers which Canada owes a debt of gratitude for blowing the truth and giving rascality a blow between the eyes.—Toronto Mail and Empire.

THE YUKON ROYALTY.

Toronto Mail and Empire.
One of the counts in the general indictment of Mr. Sifton in respect to his administration of the Yukon is that the gold royalty is oppressive. The dissatisfaction with that ten per cent. impost has been persistent and universal. From the time it was instituted up to the present, the complaint of them iners against it has been growing louder, and to the miners' condemnation has been added that of nearly every observer on the spot. Opinion in British Columbia is not divided with a large experience in gold mining and the one most closely interested in the development of the Yukon has been very outspoken in opposition to it. Instead of listening dispassionately to the expressions of the people most concerned and setting to work to find out whether the burden ought to be eased, the minister treated the complaints as persons unworthy of attention. The part of the press devoted to him and used by him turned as one pack upon the miners, called them aliens and worthless persons, and said they were people who objected on principle on paying taxes, large or small. This habit of the Sifton syndicate of newspapers of bristling up unfriendly towards anyone who has a word to say to find with their patron is a disgrace. It betrays a fear of exposure, and thereby leads the public to suspect that the system is indeed "rotten to the core." The alarmed manner of the Sifton press has done much to awaken the people up to the seriousness of the situation. Mr. Sifton's misgovernment has created in the Yukon. Its attempts to discredit the men who protest against the royalty as excessive will only the more incline the public to believe these men. It is idle to brand them all as aliens. As was said before, the business men and miners of British Columbia denounced the royalty as excessive from the outset. Now we are hearing from British subjects in the country, in the United Kingdom and in Australia, as to the actual working of the tax. In one of her letters to the London Times Miss Shaw gives some idea of what is the state of feeling in Dawson City on the subject of the royalty. She mentions a case in which \$26,000 had been expended in mining which produced only \$21,000 worth of gold. Though after spending his time the operator was \$5,000 poorer than when he began, his diminished wealth was still subjected to the 10 per cent. tax, because it had been turned into Yukon gold. Against this taxing the gross output of the council of the Incorporated London Chamber of Mines—in which there are 40 British companies carrying on operations in the Yukon—has protested. A memorial to the Canadian government has been drawn up, and signed by these 40 British companies, urging that relief be given from this and other Yukon "grievances." So heavy an impost, it is pointed out, gives rise to exactions of the law, that is, to smuggling, and is largely instrumental in diverting desirable enterprise to the neighboring fields of Alaska. The memorial concludes: "It is not necessary for us to dwell upon the injurious effects of these measures, and the consequences to which it is universally considered they will lead. It is sufficient to say that these results would be at variance with the general welfare of Canada, while they will discourage investors in Canadian enterprises resident in the United Kingdom, and will greatly hinder the actions of persons who are seeking to promote the development of the resources of Canada."

We cannot afford to "discourage British investment." Ten per cent. on the gross output must be too heavy for them if 2 per cent. was enough for Mr. Sifton's friends, Mackenzie and Mann. Two per cent. was all the minister proposed to levy upon the yield of the magnificent 3,750,000 acres he was giving them for the 150-mile tramway. But, like "Oom Paul," Mr. Sifton seems determined to wring all he can out of the governing and serving the Yukon, and to make up a big surplus it possible for Mr. Tarte's program of increasing expenditure. Though there were upwards of twenty thousand people in Dawson City, for whose protection and regulation a large force had to be kept in the country, the cost of governing these 20,000 people has to come out of some four or five thousand men actually engaged in digging for gold. The other fifteen thousand, many of them mere parasites on the mining industry, are untaxed.

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What is

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LONDON'S FIRE EQUIPMENT.

Experiments With a View to Introducing Several American Ideas.

LONDON, Oct. 20.—New fire engines, constructed on the American plan, are being experimented with here, and horses are being attached to the ladders.

THE BRIDE

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Passengers Safe-
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passengers of her o-
taxed her to her o-
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the Sound. The Dirigo
hull crashed into the
utter darkness and
der full speed the
awoke all sleeping
brought them trem-
were in frenzied ex-
soon quieted them
all were safely land-
Next day the Alki-
and the Brixham
passengers on to Wr-
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Alaska. Steamship
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made on her. She
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succeeded in launching
towards her present
and placed her under
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being. Length, 183 f-
and depth of hold, 14
tonnage, 1,000 tons
000, which amount, it
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REMARKABLE N

A Berlin Astronomer

With a Stra

London Times.

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