The Colonist.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 1898.

AN ARRANGEMENT EFFECTED.

Yesterday the COLONIST expressed the opinion that a public meeting ought to be called for the purpose of taking action in regard to matters relating to the trade of the Yukon. Such action seemed highly necessary, especially in view of the following article printed in the Post-Intelligencer of Sunday:

The Post-Intelligencer calls attention to the communication in another column, addressed to the Victoria COLONIST, relative to duties collected at Skagway and Dyea by American customs officers on Canadian bought outfits. It gives an exact view of the situation, and, coming from Canadian sources, it is especially pertinent. The bonding privilege granted by the government is of no value, as long as the Washington government insists that each outfit be accompanied through American territory by a customs officer. This is an expensive undertaking, and persons who have made the error of buying in Victoria find it cheaper to pay full duty. The result is that the American duty is imposed on Canadian outfits at Dyea and Skagway and the full Canadian duty on American goods (except 100 pounds) at Lake Tagish. Inasmuch as the original cost of outfits bought in the United States averages much less than outfits bought in Canada, there is but one thing for Klondykers to do, and that is to outfit in Seattle.

We felt that the time had come when some decided action should be taken by the people of Canada to assert their rights in the premises, and are more pleased than we can express to learn that such action is not now necessary, but that arrangements have been made with the Washington government whereby Canadian goods in transit may be carried under a certificate and no charge for an escort will be required. We congratulate Hon. Mr. Sifton upon the result of his negotiations at Washington, and the people of the British Columbia cities upon the removal of a very serious barrier to their trade.

We wish, however, to draw attention to the exquisite meanness of the course which the Post-Intelligencer expected its government to take. It believed that while an engagement would be made to permit the passage of goods in bond, such charges would be imposed that it would be better to pay the duties. To the Seattle paper such a course seemed fully worthy of a great nation. Now that the contrary has been done and the passes are free to Canadians and United States citizens alike upon precisely similar conditions, that is duty must be paid only on United States goods, the effect of the contention made on be half of Seattle will be the reverse of what was intended. A community that would resort to such a means of securing trade must have a very poor case indeed. The policy of Victoria merchants is to make the news of the arrangements as widely known as possible in order to counteract the representations that have been made as to the cost of getting goods across the strip at the head of Lynn Canal in possession of the United States.

There are now no obstacles in the way of British Columbia merchants pressing for the outfitting trade with all the energy they possess. The Klondyke is in Canada and Canadian merchants can get its business if they move after it in a business-like way.

It is a source of pleasure to be able to recognize a friendly and accommodating spirit on the part of the Washington authorities in this matter. It is in striking contrast to what the Coast newspapers demanded,

THE POLITICAL OUTLOOK.

From a general review of the political situation throughout the province we feel satisfied that not only has opposition sentiment made no progress during the past year, but that in most localities the government's position is stronger than it was a year ago. We are not unmindful of the difficulties attending the conduct of provincial affairs in a manner calculated to retain popularity. We do not lose sight of the fact that in British Columbia there is a numerous new element composed of men who naturally have little political sympathy with those who have been on the ground before them. The latter observation applies as well to the opposition as to the government, but it is an element in the political situation that must be taken into account. We think it can be fairly claimed that, as the new element is becoming more familiar with political conditions here, it is learning to regard the present provincial government with greater favor. There hardly ever was anything just like the campaign waged by the local opposition eighteen months ago. It was made up for the most part of the bitterest personalities, and backed up by assertions of personal dishonesty that would have pictured an appalling state of things, if they had been true. When certain Dominion ministers visited the province in 1896 they were surrounded by a clique of professed friends who devoted what part of the time, they could spare from urging their claims to patronage, to the villification of Hon. Mr. Turner and his colleagues. It is no breach of confidence to say that those ministers were seriously disturbed by the representations made to them; nor do we make public what was intended simply for private communication, when we say that the members of the Dominion cabinet have since then come to entertain a very different opinion on the subject. Our provincial government stands well at Ottawa, now that the ministers there have learned the true character of our provincial ministers and have been brought into touch with their general policy. The same thing is true of the new element above spoken of. The villifications of the opposition have reacted.

Throughout the farming districts there is a growing feeling that the Hon. Mr. Turner and his associates have the welfare of the agricultural interests at heart, and will do their utmost to advance them. For our own part, we are strongly impressed with this view, and know from the personal assurances of the Premier how strongly impressed he is with the necessity of discovering every practicable means of promoting farming, and how high a place he accords it among British Columbia industries. There is no doubt as to the important part farming is to play in this province. The mining regions must be fed, and it will tax British Columbia to the utmost to supply the necessary food. The object of the government ought to be, and we know that under the Hon. Mr. Turner it will be, to make a study of how best the farmers can be assisted to reach the thousands of consumers who will shortly begin to find their way into the province and the Northwest. The COLONIST has, as its readers well know, made a specialty of agitation for the interests of British Columbia agriculture, and on many occasions Mr. Turner has expressed his hearty approval of its course in this respect, and his own desire to co-operate with it along those lines.

From the standpoint of provincial development generally, it can be fairly claimed that the government has gained ground during the past year. It has met the requirements of the several localities promptly and well, so far as the funds at its disposal would permit. It is not the fault of the government that the whole southern portion of the province is not now feeling the impulse of railway construction. The aid granted by the general subsidy bill was ample to secure the construction of the much-needed line through the Boundary country, and only the unfortunate rivalry between two companies desirous of building the line prevented work from being begun. The Cassiar railway plan has been wholly successful and work will soon be under way.

The administration of the mining department has been in the highest degree satisfactory. If there has been any causes for complaint, they have been kept singularly secret, and the public needs hardly to be told that the opposition press would not feel under any obligation to secrecy upon such a point. Indeed, it would have been their duty to have made any grievances on this score as widely known as possible, so that the demand for their rectification might have been general. We say that the highly satisfactory manner in which the important department has been administered has been calculated to make friends for the government in all parts of the province, and, what is more, has done so.

Naturally the department of public works is one that comes very closely home to the people. Its ramifications reach every section of the province. It has to deal with matters upon which every one feels confident to form an opinion for himself. Yet the year has passed and not a single specific expression of disapproval has been heard, except one that was investigated by the legislature at the last session and pronounced groundless. We say that the manner in which the great spending department of the government has been administered, the entire absence of scandals and the general satisfaction given in all parts of the province form the best possible answer to the charges of extravagance, incompetency and even worse that have been spread broadcast over the country, and we claim that this record has already had and will continue to have the effect of making friends for the government.

We speak of the legal department of the government and the management of the finances only because we do not wish to be regarded as avoiding them. We simply invite the keenest criticism of these departments, against which there has not been brought during the year a single charge.

The people at large are beginning to appreciate the facts as above set out, and the consequence is that in every part of the province there is a growing feeling of kindliness towards and confidence in the administration, which sentiments will at the next election find expression in a triumphant vindication of the government's general policy and conduct.

LI HUNG CHANG pleads for peace for China. China, he says, needs reform and reform will be impossible without peace, The Chinese statesman is wiser than some of his European contemporaries and infinitely more civilized.

SIR CHARLES TUPPER has stirred some of the Winnipeg people up by advocating the Stickeen-Teslin route to the Yukon. Sir Charles knows what he is talking about.

RUSSIA now wants an alliance with Japan. The lion once wanted an alliance with the lamb. He got it. He likewise got the lamb.

THE Times has very promptly and cordially acknowledged its error in regard to the work done on Mr. Gosnell's Year Book.

A COAL TAX.

A part of the plan of the local opposition is to impose a tax on coal. They have an idea, or profess to have, that in this way they can compel "the coal barons" to contribute something towards the revenue in addition to what they now pay. So they can. There is a large quantity of coal used in British Columbia and if a sum, however small, could be collected upon each ton it would amount to something very handsome. That is what the Nova Scotia government thought, and the way it worked out is illustrated by the following extract from Westminster, a religious periodical printed in Toronto:

Nova Scotia gets a royalty of 12½ cents on every ton of coal mined by the syndicate referred to. This is a very valuable contribution to our provincial revenue. Other coal companies pay 10 cents royalty per ton. It was the offer of 2½ cents additional royalty that tempted the legislature to surrender to the syndicate. But, mark this, no sooner did the syndicate get possession of our coal fields than the price of every grade of coal was increased double the royalty paid to the treasury. It is the consumer, not the syndicate that pays.

As it worked in Nova Scotia, so it would work in British Columbia. The consumer, not the coal baron, would pay the tax.

LOCAL POLITICS.

The attempt made by a few Liberal politicians to stampede the Liberal party in British Columbia into the ranks of the opposition has fallen very flat. We do not suppose there is a man in the province who does not see through the wretched pretence which lay at the bottom of the effort or who will be misled by it for a moment. Nothing is more certain than that the Dominion ministers do not wish anything of the kind to be brought about. They have no desire to see their party in this province weakened, at a time when it has everything to lose and nothing to gain, by mixing itself up with things which cannot by any reasonable construction be considered as germane to federal interests. If the experience of federal politics teaches anything at all, it is that nothing can happen that is worse for a ministry than to have itself entangled in provincial politics, and this is almost, we might say quite, inevitable, when the latter are run on the Dominion lines. More than one of the ministers has taken occasion to express himself on this point. A little consideration will show anyone why, from a federal standpoint, it is undesirable to mix the two sets of issues.

So far as this province is concerned, the gentlemen, who aimed at dragging Dominion party lines into the local arena, were not men of such standing or experience in public affairs, nor are they of such prominence otherwise, that the people would naturally turn to them as leaders. It was clear to the most superficial observer that they sought to rally the Liberals to their support in the local arena because they felt themselves unable to present any arguments that would influence reasonable men to place the control of the province in their hands. After months of vindictive and unscrupulous slander of the provincial ministers personally and the government as a whole, they found themselves no nearer the goal of their hopes than they were when they began their agitation. The legislative session had followed a long campaign of vilification; but not a single one of the charges with which the public had been regaled was formulated by resolution in the house or in any other way brought up for public discussion, under such circumstances that those assailed could meet and answer their assailants. The COLONIST challenged the opposition to make good their assertions on the floor of the house, but the whole session passed away, and with the single exception of one case that arose in the Lands and Works department, and was promptly thrown out by the committee appointed to investigate it, not even a breath of scandal was directed against the government or any member of it. Of resolutions and speeches there was an exhaustless supply, but not one of them was anything more than an expression of opinion on some abstract proposition upon which people might very well differ in opinion. When the session had ended the COLONIST called upon the opposition papers to do what the opposition members had failed to do, that is to make specific charges. The challenge was taken up only by the Wellington Enterprise, which made certain assertions against the management of the Attorney-General's department, and these were promptly shown to be without foundation. The opposition found itself without a leg to stand on.

Under the circumstances something had to be done to keep the party from dying from sheer inanition, and Messrs. Semlin and Cotton, like birds of a feather, flocked together and hatched out something they called a platform. It was fearfully and wonderfully made. It was of no practical utility for any mundane purpose. It was received with coldness in all quarters. Even the News-Advertiser could not get enthusiastic over it. Some of the more rabid opposition ists even went so far as to laugh at it. Nevertheless something had been done, and that something meant that what opposition there was seemed likely to be led by Messrs. Semlin and Cotton, which implied that certain ambitious people, who claim to be Liberals, would have no place in the local arena. Something to counteract this had to be done, and that something took the shape of a convention for the purpose of stampeding the Liberals into the Opposition ranks. This was the last resort of a combination that saw itself foredoomed to utter defeat unless they could discover some reason, apart from any issues that had been raised, for asking the voters of the province to unite in overthrowing the government. This convention evolved the thing called a platform. If the offspring of the joint intelligence of Messrs. Semlin and Cotton was a political curiosity, the Westminster production was a monstrosity. It can best be described by Virgil's line:

Informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum.

It was big, misshapen, and there was not a gleam of light in it. Such as it was, it was given to the world after a fashion, which, whatever it may have been, was certainly not in harmony with Liberal traditions. The Westminsterites pledged themselves in advance to a document that had not been drawn up. When the people got the text of this production they were left in a state of bewilderment. They saw something prepared for them to assent to, which meant nothing and was intended to mean nothing. There was a formal acceptance of it by some of the Opposition papers, and a repudiation of it by others, the most cordial approval of the new Liberalism coming from the Conservative News-Advertiser.

The platform having fallen as flat as a pancake—the expression is strictly classical—there was nothing left for the Opposition to do but to uncork some more vials of abuse and pour the contents upon the heads of the ministers, which interesting operation is now in full progress. In other words, the Opposition are back precisely where they were eighteen months ago. They have only abuse to serve up for the edification of those upon whose support they reckon.

We very greatly overestimate the intelligence of the people of British Columbia if they are influenced by such a campaign as the Opposition has put up, and as we have correctly described above. They will not be misled into the belief, if they are Liberals, that the cause of Liberalism in British Columbia will be promoted by identifying it with scurrilous abuse. If they are Conservatives, they will resent the attempt made to induce them to play the part of cat's-paws for a few people who claim to be the embodiment of the principles and patronage of the Liberal party. The effort to introduce Dominion lines into the contest has ignominiously failed.

THE HOOTALINQUA.

Mr. Hamlin, who has been in the Lake Teslin and Hootalinqua country on behalf of the provincial government, sends down from Dawson City an unofficial but highly satisfactory letter in regard to the river. He does not speak about the lake, but the reason of this doubtless is that his special mission was to ascertain the character of the Hootalinqua, and he has very wisely taken the first opportunity to let the government know what he learned upon this point. He did not care to trust his official report to the messenger who brought out his letter, preferring to send it along by the regular mail. Through the kindness of the Hon. G. B. Martin we are able to make an extract from the letter. Mr. Hamlin says:

"In reference to the Hootalinqua river, it is a grand waterway, from 250 to 600 feet in width, depth, generally, 11 feet, and considerably over that in many places. In two instances it sounded only 4 feet, but I believe it was not the main channel. Nothing that can be called a rapid occurs. It is undoubtedly the proper water route to this part of the world."

This is testimony of the most valuable kind and ought to be disseminated far and wide. As we have before said, the COLONIST has no desire to speak adversely of other routes to the Yukon, but it feels its duty to be to keep most prominently forward the excellence of the route by way of the Hootalinqua. Here is a fine river, flowing through a gold-bearing country. There is not the least danger to the man who trusts himself to this stream. He will be carried by it down to the Lewis river, and from the point of its junction with that stream to the mouth of the Yukon, in Behring Sea, there is not a single obstruction to navigation, or danger point even to the most inexperienced navigator. This ought to be made known everywhere. When we add to this that there will be steamers on the river next season, and that it is quite feasible to go to Teslin lake over a snow road in this winter, without running any risk at all, it would be little short of criminal if we did not strive to impress upon everyone the desirability of selecting this route to the Yukon.

We are further impressed with the necessity of this course by reading in the Oregonian an article written in the most hostile spirit in regard to the Stickeen-Teslin route. The Stickeen is represented as an exceedingly dangerous stream, and the country between it and Teslin lake as mountainous. The Stickeen is not dangerous. It has been safely navigated for years and will be navigated this year by excellent steamers. The country to be crossed on the way to Teslin lake is not mountainous. It is on the contrary remarkably level. There is a summit to pass near Telegraph lake, but after that the whole country is very far from being mountainous. There are two elevations, but they do not represent very hard work, and during the winter they can be avoided. At least such is the opinion of those persons who are most familiar with the route.

It is worth mentioning that after the Stickeen opens for navigation the road over the snow can be used for packing purposes for several weeks, for the reason that it will not thaw out for some time. It is the intention of the Dominion government, we understand from undoubted authority, to put a sum of money in the estimates to provide for the immediate construction of a wagon road. Everything points to this route being the most popular one to the Yukon. The land journey is longer than by way of the passes, but it is safer, and the river navigation is infinitely better, with the advantage of being through country well worth prospecting.

THE Toronto Globe devotes upwards of a column of its editorial space to the advocacy of the route from Edmonton to the Yukon. In this the Globe is living up to its recent record, which seems to be to oppose everything that is in the interest of British Columbia, even if in so doing it puts itself in the position of wrongly advising those who look to it for counsel. If nothing will suit the Globe but that people shall travel over a thousand miles or more of land to get to the Yukon, when they can reach the same point in a shorter and far easier way by the Coast routes, why not advocate the Kamloops route? It is infinitely better than that from Edmonton.

SUPERINTENDENT CONSTANTINE settles the matter. He says there are provisions enough at Dawson to last until June 1st on short rations; but that hard times will begin about April 1st. By June 1st supplies will be got in by Teslin lake without any difficulty. Whether it is necessary to attempt to get in goods before that date is a matter for consideration, but we do not think the emergency is one that requires the intervention of a foreign government.

MR. E. E. SHEPPARD, who has been visiting Central and South America in the interest of trade development, writes from Guatemala to say that he will be in Victoria on the 11th instant, and will be accompanied by A. T. Romero, agent of the Peruvian government. They would like to meet Victoria merchants on their visit, and Mr. Sheppard suggests the 12th instant as a good date.

WHILE adhering to its view that no relief is needed at Dawson City, the COLONIST commends the Klondyke Mining, Trading and Transport Corporation's offer to the U. S. government to carry supplies in via the Stickeen-Teslin route. Goods can be taken in by that route as far as the Hootalinqua river, and probably all the way to the Yukon, on sleds drawn by horses.

A LOS ANGELES correspondent of a city firm writes to complain that most of the Victoria houses only quote lump prices for outfits, instead of giving details, and that in consequence many persons who intended to buy in Victoria are buying elsewhere. We draw the attention of outfitters to this.

JOHN BULL has defined his position in the Oriental matter. Now watch the other nations adjust their ambitions to suit the old gentleman's wishes. John's proposition is this: Get what you can, but what you get I will have also, and so will every other nation that wants it.

IT SEEMS regrettable that at a time when there is so much of promise before Canada, the leading papers of the East are filling their columns day after day with the most paltry party rubbish. The remark applies to the papers on both sides of politics.

THE Toronto Globe continues its opposition to federal aid to railway construction in British Columbia. The Globe these days does not seem able to see any further than the end of its nose and to have a very short nose at that.

BY WAY OF VARIETY.

The Ethics of Dancing.—Rector's Wife—You ought to avoid even the appearance of evil. Do you, yourself, think the girls who dance are right? Belle of the Parish—They must be. I know the girls who don't dance are always left.—Harlem Life.

The Kentucky Way.—Colonel Corkright—I understand that Majah Gore is terribly despondent ovuh his failure in business, Colonel Bludsoe—Yes, suh; the majah is so worried ovuh his financial troubles that he has been driven from drink.—Puck.

They Agreed.—"You will agree with me, sir," said the thin passenger with the shiny coat, "that it is wicked to put brandy in mince pies?" "Egad, suh," said the portly passenger with the shining nose, "if it is good brandy it is positively sacrilegious."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

"Rather curious that both the melon and this beefsteak should be the product of a vine," casually observed Lake Front at breakfast. "Beefsteak from a vine?" growled the dyspeptic. "Yes," was the cheerful reply, "from a bovine."

Merchant—Have you had any experience in chinaware? Applicant—Years of it, sir. Merchant—What do you do when you break a valuable piece? Applicant—Well—er—I usually set it together again and put it where some customer will knock it over. Merchant—You'll do.

An Authority.—Mrs. Porkchops (in Europe)—They say the family used to have hundreds of retainers. Mr. Porkchops—Spent 'em all, did they? Mrs. Porkchops—Spent them? I guess you don't know what a retainer is. Mr. Porkchops—I don't, don't I? I guess I've had as much law business as most folks!

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SEMI-WEEKLY COLONIST.

THIRTY-FIVE DRO

Underground River Flood can Coal Mine and En All Hands.

The Rush of Waters Wa Warning and Death Ca a Twinkling.

CHICAGO, Jan. 2.—A teleg Times-Herald from San Anto says: "A despatch from Mexico, says that the San mine, near here, was sudden with water from an undergr ...ty-five miners were dr ...n were at work in ...els in the mine. T ...tons that an undergr ...nywhere within the ... although that port ...exceedingly damp. ...rush of water came warning. There was a sharp an explosion, the wall of coal gave way and before the men safety on an upper level t water followed and the men lowed up almost before they their tools.

"An expedition will be sent mine as soon as possible to re bodies."

NOTED PAINTER DE

John A. Fraser, Who Helped to Royal Canadian Academ

NEW YORK, Jan. 2.—John A R. A., a painter in water col yesterday at his home East 93 after a prolonged illness. H years old, and had devoted life to art. Co-operating with quis of Lorne he helped to f Royal Canadian Academy of and was made its first academici several years he was the di the art school in Toront was first medalist of the Co exposition and the post of h given to his picture, "The Scotland," at the Paris Salon His series of water colors exhi the Canadian Club a few years also his English landscapes, r cently exhibited by Boussod & Co. of this city, will be by all art lovers. He wa of an old Scotch fam London, England, and came York in 1890, making this city h and becoming a prominent me the American Water Color Soci was elder brother of W. Lewis art manager of the Century M and a brother-in-law of the ill Henry Sandham. He leaves thr John A., Augustus C. and Do and three daughters, Nannie A. Louise Fraser and Mrs. Gerald

SPAIN'S COSTLY STRUG

...arther Millions for the Troops With the Stubborn Cubans — Thousand More Soldiers.

...EW YORK, Jan. 3.—A banki ...this city received $3,000,000 La Bretagne, which arrived from to-day. The gold is for shipm Cuba, where it will be used to pa Spanish soldiers.

HAVANA, Jan. 3.—La Discussio that General Blanco will take t within the next fortnight and pro east Cuba. During his absenc Havana, Senor Galves, premier new cabinet, will assume contro government.

MADRID, Jan. 3.—General W behavior, which is considered h shuffling, in apologizing to the regent and hastily explaining Premier, Senor Sagasta, that he responsible for the publication protest, has alienated many of h porter among the Carlists who h entangle the General in the rev ary mesh. They are especially pointed at the fact that the gove appears to be satisfied that the s Weyler bubble has passed a Spanish army is not gangrened.

It is said that only three of th ish generals are in sympathy wit eral Weyler.

The government will send five and troops to Cuba at the end o ary. This will bring the troops t

TROOPS FOR THE NIL

Cameron and Seaforth Highlanders for Service in Egypt.

CAIRO, Egypt, Jan. 2.—A batt the Cameron Highlanders has b dered to be in readiness to asc Nile a fortnight hence.

LONDON, Jan. 2.—A despat Malta says that a battalion of t foath Highlanders has been ord Egypt.

FROZEN TO DEATH.

A Lumber Clerk's Misadventure in t Mountain Section.

PALLISER, B.C., Jan. 2.—(Spec P. Doran, a resident of Ottawa a clerk in W. C. Wells' lumbering lishment, left Palliser on the one of Mr. Wells' lumbering about eight miles from Leanch tion, on the C.P.R. He wa frozen to death on the trail on S morning about half a mile fro The deceased was very highly r here. He came to his death pre by being insufficiently clad, been advised not to attempt to the camp on the night in questi was bitterly cold. He had a d him, which stayed with the two nights and days, protecting from the wild animals of the mo A coroner's inquest will be held.

MOVING ON KLONDYK

Vancouver Feeling the First Effect Season's Rush.

VANCOUVER, Jan. 3.—(Special) ty-seven Mounted Police left Rosalie this afternoon. There a people bound for Klondyke now couver waiting for the next from here.