

THE LOSS OF THE BROTHER JONATHAN.

The intelligence received yesterday of the loss of the steamer Brother Jonathan, with nearly three hundred lives, in the natural course of events, threw our community into a state of horror and consternation. Among the passengers it was almost safe to calculate on fifty or sixty en route for Victoria; and the painful character of the news to those who had friends on board, or at least supposed to be on board, can well be imagined. With the imperfect details, or rather in the absence of the details of the catastrophe, and without the slightest idea of who were really passengers, it would be unwise on our part to hazard conjectures as to who are numbered among the victims. Misfortune comes too soon to most of us in the ordinary course of things, without our forcing the imagination into an event courier of every calamity. Many persons who were expected by the Brother Jonathan may have not yet left San Francisco and many who have not been expected may have gone down in the waters before Crescent City; in any case it is the duty of all to wait calmly and wait patiently for the details.

What between explosions on the rivers and wrecks off the shore the North Pacific coast has made a record for itself few sea-bound countries can excel. On the Atlantic side we do occasionally hear of a steamer with all hands lost—a vessel sunk in sight of shore; a fatal collision at sea; or a foundered craft in mid ocean; but when we look at the dangers of the various coasts, the enormous traffic between Europe and the American continent, and the nature of the winds and waves, we cannot be at a loss to account for the catastrophes we sometimes read about. On this coast, however, there is no excuse for the frightful loss of life with which communities are so often visited. We may have shores as dangerous as any on the Atlantic side, but our marine traffic does not form a labyrinth of the ocean, nor do our storms come either so frequent or so violent as those which make almost perpetual sport of the waters of the Atlantic. There is, in fact, nothing to justify the large and disproportionate loss of life which occurs along the North Pacific coast as well as on its inland waters, and we can only put the circumstance down to that carelessness as well as carelessness which has become the characteristic of water travel in this part of the world. In the absence of full information we cannot tell how the vessel was really lost. We are told she ran upon a sunken rock somewhere off Crescent City, near the boundary line of California and Oregon; but whether she was on her direct course or out of the usual channel for vessels running toward the rather dangerous harbor of Crescent City, is not stated. That fifteen passengers, however, should be the only ones saved out of three hundred would indicate very bad management on the part of the captain of the ship, or very inefficient means on board the steamer to meet the terrible exigency of a shipwreck. It is said the Brother Jonathan carried six boats; and the telegraph, however, alludes but to three, and two of these were swamped, only one having reached the shore. Be this as it may, there is a strange laxity in the laws of navigation as they are administered in California. Scarcely a steamer leaves the port of San Francisco that would be allowed in any European country to depart with passengers. Either the vessel is unfit to face a gale of wind or continued stress of weather, or she has not her complement of boats or life preservers. The calamity which has just taken place was expected any time during the past few years. Public confidence had been rudely shaken on various occasions in the seaworthiness of some of the steamers plying between this country and California. The vessels have been, generally speaking, old; and although, considering all things, the line has been more fortunate than others on the Pacific, the infrequency of casualties has been in no instance owing to the excellence of the steamer or her arrangements. The present vessel, when she was called the Commodore, as far back as 1858, was obliged to heave living as well as dead freight into the sea to save human life. Her hull, no doubt, has been strengthened since then but she is still of that class of steamers that are bound to sink immediately or go to pieces in the first contact with anything on sea. But little chance is afforded the unfortunate passengers in such a catastrophe, and the prevailing want of boats and other means for securing human life from a sinking ship, only makes the tragedy more complete. We shall await with some anxiety the particulars of the disaster; in the meantime we can only express a hope that the number of the lost may have been exaggerated.

ARRIVAL OF \$205,000 IN TREASURY.—The steamer Reliance, Captain Morse, reached New Westminster from Yale, on Monday night, bringing some twenty passengers and \$205,000 in treasure. About \$185,000 of this was for the Bank of British Columbia, and was principally in gold bars, assayed at the office of the bank in Cariboo; the remainder was in private hands.

HIGHLY IMPORTANT NEWS FROM KOOTENAY.

[From the Cariboo Sentinel.]

Through the courtesy of a gentleman on this creek, we are enabled to place the following most interesting letter from Mr. O'Reilly before our readers. It contains later and more important intelligence than has been previously received from the Southern mines, and coming from such an authority may be relied on:

Wild Horse Creek, Kootenay, 18th June, 1865.

AN EXPRESS STARTED.
An enterprising individual named Reid, (formerly of Jack of Clubs creek) is about to start an express to Hope, and I take advantage of his first trip to send this letter.

THE KOOTENAY MINES.

The mines, so far as they are yet known, are "shallow diggings," from 4 to 10 feet below the surface. The gold is mostly found on the bed-rock, which is blue slate, soft and easily worked. But little has been done this season from the scarcity of provisions—almost famine—that existed in the spring, and latterly because of the high stage of the water; also the difficulty that always takes place of working bench and hill claims while the creek remains unworked. One company have just completed a ditch nearly four miles in length, and capable of carrying 2000 inches of water, and in a short time the hills will be prospected; till then it is impossible to say anything definite about this camp. The creek and low benches all pay well—from \$10 to \$15 to the hand, and three companies made last week as much as 100 ounces per day. At present it would be difficult to ascertain even approximately either the daily or weekly returns. There are about 800 men employed, and about half that number looking about, who cannot get work; when the water subsides a much greater number will get employment. Outside of the claims already taken up, and which are known to contain gold, there is no prospecting going on. I have never known a class of miners who show less enterprise in this respect. From the above you will see that Kootenay is not so extensive as was represented, though the claims are undoubtedly good, and have the great advantage of being easily worked. About a fortnight since our population numbered 1500, when a report reached us that rich diggings had been discovered on Elk river, which flows into the Kootenay river about 50 miles S.E. of this place, and 16 north of the line. About 200 started immediately, but as yet nothing sufficiently reliable has transpired.

THE UPPER COLUMBIA MINES.
The Upper Columbia river is also causing some excitement. A man named Henry Carnes arrived here a few days since for the purpose of selling his claims and reporting others on a creek which is called after himself.

CARNES CREEK
is situated on the east bank, about twenty miles above the Upper Dalles, or at a point you will see marked on the map, "ocean four miles long, very narrow, with a number of rocks in the channel." He says that there is sufficient ground to employ 4000 men and pay \$100 a day to the hand. When he left there were between 50 and 60 men at work; beyond this nothing is known of it. I should not be surprised if a hundred men were to leave for these mines in a few days.

THE NEW ROUTE.
Mr. Dawdney has arrived and reports that he has discovered a good line for a trail from Boundary Creek, by which the total distance from Hope to the mines will not exceed 350 miles; from there to the Columbia river by this route is 60 miles; from Columbia river to Kootenay lake 65, and from the lake to Wild Horse creek 80. Mr. Dawdney will commence work on Tuesday, 20th June, with 50 men; a portion he intends to let out to contract, and says the whole line will be open by the 1st August. This will suit your book exactly, and you may consider yourself lucky in being able to avoid going by Colville, which would add at least 200 miles to your journey, besides being a most expensive route.

NO LITIGATION AT KOOTENAY.
We are all very quiet, though if we were to believe all we hear one-half of the population is made up of murderers, highwaymen, and horse thieves. There is very little litigation; Cornwall finds it hard work to kill time, particularly as there is nothing to be got in the way of fish, the waters are as muddy as the Fraser at this season. The climate is a decided improvement on that of Cariboo, though the country is not so open as was represented.

MARKET RATES.
Flour, 45c @ lb; bacon, 75; sugar, 80; butter, \$1 50; beans, 75 @ 80; dried apples, \$1; tea, \$2 50; coffee, \$1; rice, 80; candles, \$1; tobacco, \$5 @ 3 50; beef, 30 @ 35; picks, \$4; shovels, \$4 50 @ 5.

LABOR MARKET.
Carpenters per day, \$10; laborers, \$7. Mr. Dawdney could have engaged 100 men at \$75 per month had he required them.

Another Letter.
We are indebted to Mr. Frank Dunstan for the following letter, which he received by the last express from Mr. Jim Gerald, formerly well known on this creek.

FISHKILLING, KOOTENAY MINES, June 19th, 1865.
I thought I would drop you a few lines and let you know where I am now, but it is mighty hard to tell where I shall be when you receive this. There are lots of Cariboo boys here, all broke (as well as myself) and most of them wishing they were back again, so I suppose you will be glad you did not leave there; I am sure I have no desire to be back again although it may be the best place in the world, but I do not think so. I think this is a better country for me (not this camp, for this is the meanest place I ever got in without exception), but there is a good country east of here, on the American side, that is settling up very fast with white people. There is a big excitement about the Columbia at present, I think there will be some good diggings discovered in that country. The creek they are prospecting now is called Carnes' creek, and is about 300 miles from Colville; it empties into the

Columbia river, and is on the British Columbia side of the line. I do not know whether I shall go there or no, I may take a notion to go East, but it is hard to say.

AND ANOTHER

The letter of which the following is a copy is from Mr. Fred. White, a packer, and was received by Mr. Joe Copland, who kindly allowed us to publish it.

KOOTENAY, FISHERVILLE, B. C., June 16th, 1865.

Here I am in this God-forsaken country and do not know what to write. Times are dull, in fact dull is no name. There are several of the Cariboo boys here, and without exception they are the poorest lot I ever saw. The season was very late here, and when grub came in the camp was in a starving condition and everybody in debt—claim holders in particular—and are still so; the water is so high that the creek claims are laid over until August; some of the bar claims pay very well, that is for this country, but they are all owned by men that came in last fall, and all strangers to me. My train has made one trip and will be back with a second load in about two weeks; I wish I had the goods in some other place outside of this, for I can't sell a dollar's worth for cash. Flour is selling at 45 cents; beans, 50; sugar, 75; bacon, 75; fresh beef, 25 and 30, on jaw-bone; clothing is cheaper here than at Yale. I will try and close out packing this season, if I don't get broke before I can do so, and hope to see you next winter in Victoria. Reports say that diggings have been struck on the Columbia; I saw a friend of mine who told me he had got some very good prospects on a creek about 300 miles above Colville, he left his party of about forty men there, and came here to sell his claims and then he is going back; Johnny Cluckston, Bob Nouns and several others are there, and we expect to hear from them soon. There is no gambling going on here, but there is about a thousand sports, and if you took them all by the heels and gave them a good shaking you might possibly be able to shake out \$100.

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Lytton, B. C., July 5, 1865.

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