

The Colonist

MONDAY, JANUARY 10, 1898

THE LOCAL OPPOSITION.

What British Columbia needs during the next few years is an administration composed of men with some knowledge of public affairs and some experience in dealing with the many questions that are certain to arise from day to day in constantly increasing numbers, as the development of the province goes on.

For this reason the character of the opposition is a very important factor in the local political situation. When a party of men seek to have their fellow citizens place the administration of affairs in their hands, they ought to be able to point to some evidence of their capacity to administer them.

Mr. Semlin is leader of the opposition, and presumably would be the leader of a new government. Everyone who knows Mr. Semlin likes him. He is a fine, honorable specimen of manhood. He is not lacking in ability.

Mr. Cotton is a gentleman of ability. He is not without popularity. He is a close reasoner. He has considerable knowledge of affairs and might be made useful in a subordinate place in a government.

Mr. Semlin is another gentleman who is much thought of by everyone who has come in contact with him. He feels himself, however, that he has been a legislative failure, and no one either in the house or out of it regards him as fitted for an administrative post.

Mr. Sword is a gentleman of much more than average ability and a good verbal critic of legislation. He may possess administrative ability, but we hardly think his training and experience have developed it.

Concerning the other members of the opposition we need not speak particularly. For them all the Colonist entertains none but kindly feelings, and in saying that they have not exhibited such qualities as would be a guarantee of greater usefulness on the right of Mr. Speaker than they have displayed on the other side of the house, we only say what every one says, and what it would be superfluous to repeat, if it were not that politics is a practical business and when people talk of a change it is important to think not only of what the change is from, but what it is proposed to change to.

That our views upon the above points are not peculiar to ourselves, but are shared in by a large proportion of those who are opposed to the government, is evidenced by the fact that the movement which found expression in the New Westminster convention was as much a revolt against the local opposition leaders as a demonstration against the Hon. Mr. Turner and his colleagues.

CONSUL SMITH'S REPORT.

The Colonist can endorse every word of what Senator Macdonald says in his letter about Consul Smith's December report to his government. The consul states the position of Victoria in the fairest possible manner. Victoria he describes as "naturally the gateway of the Northwest." We print the report in to-day's issue.

We think it well to emphasize the point made by Senator Macdonald about there being no discrimination against United States citizens in the collection of duties at the Yukon frontier. No questions are asked as to a man's nationality. When he reaches the custom house at Lake Tagish he must pay duty on goods not made in Canada, whether he owes allegiance to Queen Victoria or is an alien.

Consul Smith has made a very favorable impression upon the people of this city, which will be strengthened by his frank and manly statement of the matter forming the subject of his December report. In this he represents the best type of American citizenship, which does not try to deceive itself and does not think anyone for trying to deceive it about matters touching upon its business interests.

THE NEWS FROM DAWSON.

The latest news from Dawson City will serve to stimulate the desire of people to get into the country. So far there has not been an unfavorable report received. This is somewhat exceptional. In nearly every case, where a mining country has been opened up, the adverse accounts are almost as numerous as those that are favorable, but in the case of the Klondyke everyone has the same story of abundant gold.

Under these circumstances we feel very certain that a long period of prosperity is to be looked for on the basis of Yukon trade, and it behooves our business men to examine into the situation from that standpoint. The present year will witness a tremendous rush into the country and necessarily a good deal of outfitting. Most of the parties who go in will take a year's supply of provisions; but many will not, and their supplies must be replenished from stocks taken into the country by merchants.

We have no means of measuring the number of people who can get into the Yukon valley this year, or who will winter there, if they can. We do not like to make extravagant estimates, but assuming that 50,000 people will get into the country and half of them remain there, and these are figures that many people will consider absurdly small, the amount of money that will be required for food, clothing, household utensils, machinery and other things will be enormous.

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While some further particulars remain to be made public, sufficient is known of the agreement between the Canadian government and the United States government as to the regulations at Dyea, to show that they are wholly satisfactory, and that no further impediments will be placed in the way of the transportation of Canadian goods across the narrow strip of territory now in possession of the United States, but which may ultimately be found to be part of Canada.

We are glad to make public a recognition of Hon. Mr. Sifton's good work in this matter. He has taken the question up with a great deal of business sense, and appears to have arrived at as good results as could be expected. This shows the advantage of having the ministers visit the Coast and learn from personal observation what the situation calls for.

There will be much weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth in certain quarters south of us at the way things have worked out at Dyea. The great American hog has been very much in evidence lately on the Sound. The Washington government has put a ring in his nose. This will not, however, prevent him squealing pretty loudly.

Through the kindness of Hon. Fred. Peters we are able to give our readers full details of the sealing award. It will be observed that interest has been allowed in every case. We gather from the list that only the actual damages and interest upon them has been allowed, and the prospective damages have been rejected altogether.

As we view the matter, the sealers would appear to have good claim upon their own government for compensation for the damages caused by their being driven from a legitimate occupation. It has been decided that they had a right to kill the seals, that the United States was bound to pay them for the actual loss they sustained by reason of the seizures.

A CORRESPONDENT writes from Seattle asking the Colonist to oppose the proposed scheme of an individual to get a cinch on the route around Lake Lindenman and charge a fee of \$2 on all people crossing it.

The Times makes an attack upon "the Dunsuir family." We submit that this is running politics pretty well down into the ground. It is interesting to know that in the opinion of Senator Templeman's paper the Dominion and provincial governments which secured the building of the E. & N. railway were blockheads and dunderheads.

The wages of the 20,000 cotton mill operatives in the State of Maine have been reduced. This seems to give color to the recent statement of a prominent New York minister to the effect that the day of prosperity for the United States has passed never to return.

We think we will have to ask our correspondents to excuse us from printing any more letters about "boys." The subject is as exhaustless as the sea, and if we do not draw the line now we may find it necessary to give the whole paper up to the discussion.

The Kansas City Times says that the United States government is running behind at the rate of \$168,000,000 a year. This is probably an exaggeration, although there is no doubt that the Dingley tariff is proving a failure as a revenue producer.

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The Tacoma Ledger complains that Consul Smith's report contains good advertising matter for Victoria. That is because it tells the truth. The truth is the only advertisement that Victoria needs.

If Great Britain guarantees the new Chinese loan it will be on condition that new ports are made open, and free to all the world. A fair field and no favor always was John Bull's motto.

Spain is the latest nation to receive the advantage of that preferential tariff in favor of Great Britain. Come, Mr. Fielding, move to make it unanimous.

AND now it is Labrador that is coming to the front as a gold-producing country. What a trick nature has of putting gold where it is hard to get at!

THE CANADIAN PRESS.

THOSE LIBEL SUITS. Premier Turner has used good judgment in settling the machinery of the law into operation against those journalistic traducers, the Province and other papers following in its steps. They will now have the opportunity of either proving their charges in court or else of admitting themselves to be slanderers.

If it can be proven to be a crime for any public official to have his name associated with a mining company, now is the Province's chance to have this new crime clearly defined. If such association justifies a newspaper in publishing columns of coarse innuendo and scurrilous abuse, the Province will doubtless look for its justification.

When men of high character are called to public office, they naturally shrink from acceptance if they feel that they are to be made defenceless targets by any newspaper that disagrees with them. This libel suit will doubtless have a tonic effect upon those papers whose laziness makes them prefer ill-natured gossip to sensible news publication, and we may expect a general bracing up all along the line.

Now that the snow road project is a dead issue, the proposed wagon road to Cascade City can be discussed without any side lines being tacked to it. It is certain that the wagon road to the Victory-Drumph and Veiwet groups, on the Pacific mountains, will receive assistance from the government.

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MR. MACKINTOSH. That Unless Ottawa and Are Discreet There Be Trouble Suggested Limitation Rights to the U Stickeen Riv (Special to the Colonist) WINNIPEG, Jan. 5.—Late to-day by a press of Hon. Chas. H. Mackintosh vacated the office of lieutenant of the Northwest Territories. He anticipated any friction with the United States and Canada in the Yukon. He says "There certainly will be less the governments at Ottawa exercise wise While the discovery of gold late the Northwest and British as it populated South Africa and the Western State same time it has created various quarters. "I remember when Sir Donald was roundly abused in the Washington treaty, route most talked about, the river, is free to all imper under that treaty. Still it surprises me at all to find men in the United States question whether the freedom carries with it the right of Stickeen when in a frozen c yet to find them insist upon embargo upon gold convey their territory to points in C "These issues may be raised game in order to coerce Cana action with the policy ad some of putting a duty upon out of Yukon into the United States. "Then again, the tax imposed, as well as the reserve ternate claims by the govern day, are likely to cause stro and to disturb the volcano you know there are more polit statesmen in the neighboring Therefore it must be appa trouble will arise unless all act with caution and discretio

THE PRAIRIE PROV Half Rates on Seed Grain—F forcements for Skagway the Trails. WINNIPEG, Jan. 5.—The C previous years, will this ye seed grain in Manitoba and west Territories at one-half freight rates. A circular de the matter is to be issued this Another party of 24 Northwe Police will leave Regina for Skagway. E. Dodge, a well-known city or, has assigned a Liberal convention for W ma will be held at Rat Portage ay 31.

AN IMPORTANT PRONOUNC Sir Charles Tupper to Enunciate servative Policy at Carbet To-Morrow. WINNIPEG, Jan. 5.—It is st Sir Charles Tupper will, at the to be tendered him on Friday berry, enunciate the policy of I at the coming session of the I house.

Minister for Klondyke. WINNIPEG, Jan. 6.—(Special) S. Grant, who has been app Presbyterian minister to K passed through the city yester way to Vancouver. Mr. Grant to Fort Selkirk if possible and d congregation. Rev. Mr. Dick decided to remain at Skagway.

Mr. Macintosh Coming WINNIPEG, Jan. 6.—(Spec) Lieut.-Governor Macintosh le to-day with his family for where they will reside in futur Belgian Prince Coming LONDON, Jan. 6.—The Bruss pondent of the Daily Chronicle the nephew of King Leopold, of Prince Albert Leopole, the supple to the Belgian that make a long tour of the Unit and Canada.

ASSERTION AND DEN Manitoba and Ontario Ministers Interested in Peculiar Rail Promotion. TORONTO, Jan. 5.—Nothing here about the report that Greenway has abandoned his railway scheme. It was repo Winnipeg that the minister h conference with the Ontario g about the construction of a l aliel the Canadian Pacific to perior, part of it running th States. A leading member of erument here denies the truth port. He says the Ontario g has not discussed such a sche

INTER-PROVINCIAL BOU Commissioners Busy Determin Between Manitoba and Ont TORONTO, Jan. 5.—The com on the delimitation of the bo tween Manitoba and Ontario returned from a three month the new boundary line. T traversed is a sixty mile stre the north end of Lake of th the Winnipeg river. The com marked out a sixty mile road, from the Lake of the Woods etones. Weyer Making Troub MADDIS, Jan. 6.—It is the elief that the decision to General Weyer will lead to t tion of the minister of wa Correa. The sensible man never on he breaks his leg he is always th it isn't his neck.