

Atlin and Klondike

Mr. D. R. Ker Gives His Impressions of the Great Mining Districts.

Advantages that Victoria Merchants Have Over Their American Competitors.

Mr. D. R. Ker is home again. He has had just one month of travelling and personal experience in what the miners term "the inside," and that month is quite enough to convince him that both the Klondike and the Atlin are great countries, offering unlimited business opportunities, and not to be exhausted for many years to come.

Although he has not adopted in advance a determination not to pay any attention to the stories of the mismanagement of the Yukon, he found it absolutely impossible to escape the universal evidence of indignation in this respect, and what he has to say on the subject will no doubt be read with much interest, as he has made a careful study of the situation from the shoulder, and laying the blame where it is rightly entitled to rest.

One notable example of the results following the policy of incompetence as successfully demonstrated by the present government in its administration of the North, directly concerns that splendidly equipped and well equipped Police. They have by their thorough efficiency, courage and general usefulness made a name for the country that it could not have gained in any other way—a name that stands out in sharp contrast with the character won by other examples of their kind.

There is a limit, however, to the forbearance of any man or class of men, and now that the police have been reformed for their efficiency and for being forced to assume the hazardous carriage of mails in the heart of the Arctic winter, without any recognition in augmented salary, they are bound to assert that it is time for them to call a halt, and in consequence the great majority will not be content with a period of service a few months hence, decline to re-enlist, leaving it to the government to fill their places with inferior appointees, to the great loss of the country.

GOING TO THE KLONDIKE.

"I've just been away one month," said Mr. Ker in speaking of his experiences yesterday. "It only took me eight days to go to Dawson—which is the only route that has been opened in transportation conditions during the last year. I went by the Tees, and everyone who has been to Dawson at Skagway, it's a wonderful railway, too, quite the opposite of what many have been pleased to describe it. They said, for example, that it was built on the snow, and not to be trusted when the summer warm weather loosed its foundations.

"The road is in the fact, it is a first-class road in every respect, it is the most solid road I have ever travelled over. The Atlin and Klondike branch of the Northern Railway system is closely approaching perfection. Late reports to the effect of great damage having been done to the road are, fortunately, very much exaggerated. The company lost a water tank—and that was the only damage done to their loss, with perhaps a little timber.

"Taking the Australian at Bennett, I travelled on her White Horse, where I transferred by the way which Norman Macaulay is operating to the satisfaction of all grades of travellers, and of shipping companies, and the remainder of the journey to Dawson, where I arrived on the 10th July. From the great city of the north, I went out on the great creeps that have become famous the world over, spending two or three days on the claims that have been turned and heaved, and being most agreeably surprised to find the mineralized area infinitely greater than I had expected.

PERMANENCY OF THE CAMP.

"The prospects I may say are good for business for the future. There will be little if any diminution of the importance of the Klondike during the next twenty years, nor any appreciable lessening of the supplies of More country is being prospected and new claims taken up all the time, despite the difficulty in the way created by the government order regarding the location—an order thoroughly in keeping with the wretched system that has made the Klondike a barren region.

"The excuse given for this instance is that there are an insufficient number of surveyors at the government's disposal, and the officials are to be commiserated with the allowance of claims that have not been officially surveyed, lest there be a large number of claims that are kept busy—Mr. Tom Kains is just now engaged by the civil authorities in superintending construction of a road from Dawson to the forks.

"Besides its wonderful placers, the Klondike has much to look forward to in the future from its quartz deposits, to which much attention is now being given, as well as to hydraulic possibilities. English capital has been largely interested in the hydraulic schemes put forward, and work will be done on a large scale before very long.

"A large complete hydraulic plant has gone in this summer to Indian river and another to Hunker creek, while several more are talked of. It is the general opinion of mining men that the whole of the diggings that have been worked already with the crudest of appliances and for the coarsest gold only, will ultimately be re-treated and with excellent profit to those putting in the machinery. Heretofore machinery has been available for labor has been so costly that only the best could be worked—the change in systems it is at hand, however, now.

"Not only are royalties collected upon the output of the mines, but every cord of wood that is used in the district is taxed. If by chance any one should get out of the miner's notes, he is obliged immediately at his heels who demands the payment of 25 cents—and in many cases this tax is being collected by a man who has been erected and in use for more than twelve months.

"Before a man may cut a ton of swamp hay, he is obliged to pay a price that equals \$5 per ton; and although a miner's license, for which he pays \$15, distinctly states on its face that no fish is to be taken, he is now met with a new ruling of the 12th of July last, to the effect that a special license must be taken out at a cost of \$2—or should he wish to fish for the market, at a cost of \$30.

AGRICULTURAL POSSIBILITIES.

"Nor is it in mining alone that the northern country is capable of great things. Much more can be done in the way of agriculture than has hitherto been reported. I saw oats and barley during the winter months all headed out, and had every appearance of ripening before they could be touched by the frost. They might not be worthy of classification as strictly first-class crops, but they would certainly answer the purpose well for fodder.

"Horses, too, which were turned out last fall in the locality of White Horse when rounded up this summer were in prime condition and ready to be put to work. There were also a number of cattle lost last year on the Dalton trail, and recently recovered—in quite as good condition as though the best of care had been taken of them.

"Besides this, I saw gardens of vegetables that quite contradicted the general impression that the Klondike—cabbages, turnips, lettuce, radishes and peas—all were doing well, ripening rapidly and with good flavor, and in fact showing results that the same vegetables would in any section of the Coast.

"As for the business of the Klondike country, it is, I consider, in a thoroughly healthy condition. All appear to be doing well and getting fair prices for their commodities. Cash rules almost all the time, and the merchant and his customer are daily securing a better share of the trade. More could undoubtedly be got if the travellers were not appointing an independent tribunal to investigate the charges of all who come daily. Such a tribunal should be granted in justice to the government, in justice to the merchant, and in justice to the accused officials. The investigation by the Commission Ogilvie is every day becoming more and more regarded as the merest farce. It was circumscribed in its scope that it could do nothing else, and no one would accordingly come forward and place grievances before it.

VICTORIA'S OPPORTUNITY.

"The storekeepers are realizing more and more the disadvantages of buying in the United States, and consequently the stores here are being more and more supplied by Seattle and San Francisco, will be practically a thing of the past in another year. The big business men of Dawson see that the big companies come to Victoria and Vancouver for their stocks. They realize that the companies have had mature experience in the necessities of the Northern trade, and they now begin to understand that where they buy is the best supply point.

"Hence if the Victoria and Vancouver merchants will only make an intelligent use of the trade now, they will get it. They must always remember, however, to send nothing but strictly first-class goods, the exact line of goods desired by the northern customer, and standard goods. If Lea & Perrin's sauces are ordered, it will not do to send an inferior imitation, nor will it do to neglect the lesser grades of American necessities and completeness in packing—and American study of the tastes of the customer.

"As for supplies of another sort—the most of the machinery here, and the most altogether superseded the primitive methods at first adopted, and many of the miners are coming out this year with a considerable number of tools, which the Albion Iron Works will have opportunity to supply.

KLONDIKE ADMINISTRATION.

"When I went north it was my intention to close my eyes and shut my ears to all stories of the Klondike, and to do so I found it impossible to do so. One cannot move without being impressed with Klondike misgovernment. One cannot hear anything but incidents of maladministration.

"In the first place, a woeful mistake is made in attempting to collect so large and disproportionate a royalty. All are quite ready to admit that a royalty should be collected, but the great objection is to the amount and the manner of its collection. The present system is so heavy upon the mine-owners, and this again is largely owing to the neglect of the government to collect the royalties on the claims that have been collected in taxes of various sorts—for everything is taxed in some way or another.

"It is not likely that much will be done this winter. Atlin is strictly a summer diggings. A large proportion of the creeks and rivers are frozen, and no work could be done until a few weeks ago. During this time, however, a quantity of gold has been taken from the best sources, and would judge that at least three-quarters of a million will be the output this year—with the best half of the season. The claims of Atlin are, of course, not on a par for richness with those of Klondike, but yet they are, in the main, good, and paying properties.

ATLIN IS ALL RIGHT.

"With reference to Atlin—the country got a bad setback, as all are aware, through the early bungling by which everything was tied up. All are ready to admit that no work could be done until a few weeks ago. During this time, however, a quantity of gold has been taken from the best sources, and would judge that at least three-quarters of a million will be the output this year—with the best half of the season. The claims of Atlin are, of course, not on a par for richness with those of Klondike, but yet they are, in the main, good, and paying properties.

AMERICAN PRACTICE.

"There is a grave objection taken by merchants of the North importing furs to the double collection of duty by American officials—a collection that seriously affects the interests of the Canadian men, inasmuch as the effect will be that the Northern merchants, when they find themselves compelled to order their furs fresh from Seattle, will at the same time place their orders there for groceries which otherwise would be sent to Victoria or Vancouver for.

"As a consequence, the entire business will be lost to our people. I should say that if the American government insists in the continuation of these untair regulations, the Canadian merchants should make immediate representations to Ottawa which will cause the undoing of all perishable goods at Log Cabin, and after these have been properly inspected, and have valid duty in full, authority should be granted for their re-loading and proceeding to the coast.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

"One cannot help thinking, while fully appreciating the magnitude of the undertaking from Skagway to Bennett, that a great mistake was made in not permitting the construction of the Glenora line out on the coast, and that, regardless altogether of the unfairness of the proceeding. If this had been done, the importance of the results to British Columbia and British Columbia merchants can hardly be over-estimated. In conversation with several interested parties at Skagway, I learned that there was a plan to build a line towards Skagway being made a British port. If such should ever be the case, this will, to a very great extent, become the distributing point for the whole interior, as by carrying large stocks to Skagway a considerable saving of time will be made in filling orders from Dawson and other points in the great interior.

"More especially would this saving in time be accomplished when the through telegraph line is completed. The government line at present is commenced at Bennett and was situated in operation to Little Salmon on the 20th of last month. It is expected to reach Dawson not later than the end of November.

INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL.

"Speaking of incidents of his interest in the Klondike, Mr. Ker says that the Tyrrell has been patched up and has gone down the river. The Anglican will also be up in a few days, and in business again as usual.

Several Victorians Among Those Most Recently From Northern Capital.

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TURNER, BEETON & CO. Details Respecting the New Limited Liability Company.

A London letter to the Vancouver News-Advertiser under date of July 19 says: "As I have already mentioned, the object of Mr. J. H. Turner's visit to London is to convert his firm's business into a limited liability company, and a few details from the prospectus will, no doubt, be of interest. The company will be styled Turner, Beeton & Company, Limited (British Columbia and London) and will acquire in addition to the business hitherto carried on in British Columbia and London by Turner, Beeton & Co. and H. O. Beeton & Co., that carried on in Victoria by Lens & Leiser. The capital has been fixed at £140,000, divided into 14,000 6 per cent. cumulative preference shares of 5 each, and 14,000 ordinary shares of the same amount. The vendors will take the whole of the ordinary shares in part payment of the purchase money, while 180 per cent is invited to subscribe for preference shares. The purchase price has been fixed at £220,000, payable as to £70,000 in full paid ordinary shares, and £150,000 in full paid preference shares. The directors are as follows: Sir Wm. Boord, Bart., Wakehurst Place, Haywards, J. H. Turner, Esq., of Victoria, the provincial parliament and late premier of the province of British Columbia; J. E. Kirk, Esq., 35 Finsbury Circus, London; E. C. G. G. Kirk, Esq., 35 Finsbury Circus, London. The bankers are the Capital and Counties Bank, London, and the Bank of British Columbia, Victoria. Mr. T. Fenney is secretary, and the office is at 35 Finsbury Circus, London.

International Tennis Honors

Pelly of Seattle to Meet Foulkes for the Championship

Yesterday at the tennis courts was the last day but one of the most successful tournament ever held by the Victoria club, and to-day spectators will witness the grand finale of the challenge rounds. Yesterday was of no surprise. Mr. A. T. Foulkes by magnificent tennis defeated Mr. George A. Hurd, the champion of the state of Washington, and was in turn vanquished by Mr. L. Pelly, of the Seattle L. T. C., who played sound volleying game from the start. Perhaps the most brilliant exhibition of the day was the match between Messrs. Pooley and Johnston and Hurd and Kussell, which up to nearly the very end was anybody's victory, though the visitors finally won. Messrs. Pooley and Johnston must be heartily congratulated for the plucky and able way they contested the game.

In the ladies' singles Miss Arrowmitch defeated Miss Berridge, though at one time the latter looked a certain winner. Miss Beattie, by subsequently vanquishing Miss Berridge, has won the final in the honor of challenging Miss Foulkes this afternoon for the championship. Mrs. Burton and Miss Foulkes will have their work cut out to defeat Miss Kitto and Miss Macrae in the final round of the ladies' doubles, and Mrs. Langley and Mrs. Foulkes will meet, and their match is expected to be interesting. Mrs. Burton and Mr. Foulkes, the result of these two matches being impossible to predict.

Although it cannot be denied that Victorians were sorry to see their home players beaten in the men's open singles and doubles yesterday, it is really a matter for congratulation that the finals in these events were of an international character. The results of the doubles events will be interesting, and Messrs. Hurd and Russell in the doubles events will be heartily congratulated. The results of the men's "our cousins from over the way," and if they are defeated they can remember that they took part in the prize yet they carry back to Puget Sound all the good wishes of the Victoria club in either event, and the hope that they will come again "many a time and oft."

Baseball, Cricket and Lacrosse Among Other Sports for To-day.

The results of yesterday's matches follow: Pooley and Mrs. Burton defeated Cuppe and Miss Macrae. Powell and Miss Langley defeated Miss Beattie and Miss Berridge. Miss Arrowmitch defeated Miss Berridge—6-7, 6-3. Mrs. Foulkes defeated Geo. A. Hurd—6-4, 8-6. Mrs. Johnston and Miss Knox defeated Miss Kitto and Miss Macrae—8-6, 6-2. Pelly defeated Johnston—7-5, 6-4. Mrs. Langley and Mrs. Foulkes defeated Mrs. E. C. G. G. Kirk and Miss Dennistoun—6-2, 6-1. Mrs. Pooley and Mrs. Langley defeated Mrs. Berridge and Mrs. Macrae—6-2, 6-4. Hurd and Russell defeated Pooley and Johnston—6-4, 6-2. Pelly defeated A. T. Goward—3-6, 7-5, 6-4. Mrs. Beattie defeated Miss Arrowmitch—6-3, 6-4. Fixtures for To-day.

The fixtures for to-day should draw an immense crowd to the courts as both the men's singles and doubles will be international matches. The results of the Seattle meeting of the Victoria clubs. Here is the programme: 10-30—Finals of the mixed doubles, Mrs. Langley and R. B. Powell vs. Mrs. Burton and J. F. Foulkes. 12 noon—Finals of the ladies' doubles, Mrs. Johnston and Miss Knox vs. Miss