

The appointment of Mr. O. G. Dennis, of Kaslo, to be Government Agent and Gold Commissioner for the Ainsworth, Slocan, Nelson, Trail Creek and Goat River mining divisions, notice of which appears in the *British Columbia Gazette* of the 26th ult., will give general satisfaction in south-west Kootenay. Mr. Dennis, as assessor for the district, has been in the Government service for a number of years and is an efficient officer and locally a popular man. The complaint heretofore in Kootenay has been that vacancies in the Government offices have been filled by tactless outsiders of the "little tin god" variety, who neither attempted nor desired to get in touch with the people of the district. Hence the appointment in this instance to the Gold Commissionership of a man who not only has learnt the requirements of his section of the country by long residence, but who is possessed moreover of good sense and other commendable qualities, is a politic step on the part of the Government.

As we go to press no intimation has been received of the intention of the Federal Government to amend the Yukon placer mining regulations, except in the one particular relating to the length of creek and river claims. This change, which reduces the size of a claim from 500 to 100 feet, is much commended by experienced placer miners, who assert that 100 feet is ample ground for one man. But it is to be hoped that as a consequence of reducing the size of the claims the Government will see the justice of making a corresponding reduction of the royalty.

The policy of the Government in the matter of the Yukon has evoked much criticism from many quarters; but, admitting there are grounds for questioning its economic applicability, the principle underlying the policy is sound. This principle is that the natural resources of the country belong to the people of the country, and that the people of the country should benefit by those resources. To British Columbians this doctrine comes now with all the attractiveness of novelty. Hitherto in this province the natural resources have been regarded as the natural property of the monopolist.

The Minister of the Interior, Mr. Sifton, has promised to visit the Coast and learn the views of practical men here on the subject of the placer regulations. This is excellent news, and the visit will doubtless be mutually advantageous to visitor and visited. The objections to the tax on the Klondyke miners is that it will be levied on the gross product and not on the surplus produce or net profits. The royalty under the regulations as they stand is levied on the gross product of the Klondyke placers, and hence no allowance is made for either capital expended or labour

spent. If this is remedied there will, we think, be little further objection to the regulations.

The Disputed Territory.

THE definition of the boundary of the narrow strip of land from the mouth of the Portland Canal to Mount St. Elias on the north-west coast of British Columbia will doubtless be decided by international arbitration. The extent of the territory here owned by respectively Great Britain and the United States is at present in dispute, owing to a difference of opinion as to the interpretation of the terms of the British treaty with Russia in 1825. As likely to be of interest we append the six essential articles of the treaty. We hope next month to discuss this question at length.

"Convention between His Britannic Majesty and the Emperor of Russia. Signed at Petersburg in February, 1825:

"Article 1. It is agreed that the respective subjects of the high contracting parties shall not be troubled or molested in any part of the ocean commonly called the Pacific Ocean, either in navigating the same, in fishing therein, or in landing at such parts of the coast as shall not have been already occupied, in order to trade with the natives, under the restrictions and conditions specified in the following articles.

"2. In order to prevent the right of navigating and fishing, exercised upon the ocean by the subjects of the high contracting parties, for becoming the pretext for an illicit commerce, it is agreed that the subjects of His Britannic Majesty shall not land at any place where there may be a Russian establishment, without the permission of the Governor or Commandant; and, on the other hand, that Russian subjects shall not land, without permission, at any British establishment on the north-west coast.

"3. The line of demarcation between the possessions of the high contracting parties upon the coast of the continent and the islands of America to the north-west shall be drawn in the manner following:

"Commencing from the southernmost point of the island called the Prince of Wales Island, which point lies in the parallel of 54 deg. 40 min. North Latitude, and between the 131st and the 133rd degree of West Longitude (Meridian of Greenwich); the said line shall ascend to the north along the channel as far as the point of the continent where it strikes the 56th degree of North Latitude; from this last-mentioned point the line of demarcation shall follow the summit of the mountains situated parallel to the coast, as far as the said point of intersection of the 141st degree of West Longitude (of the same meridian); and, finally, from the said point of intersection, the said meridian line of the 141st degree, in its prolongation as far as the Frozen Ocean, shall form the limit between the Russian and British possessions on the continent of America to the north-west.

"With reference to the line of demarcation laid down in the preceding article it is understood:

"1st. That the island called Prince of Wales' Island shall belong wholly to Russia.

"2nd. That wherever the summit of the mountains which extend in a direction parallel to the coast, from the 56th degree of North Latitude to the point of intersection of the 141st degree of West Longitude, shall