

The Klondike Nugget

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 7, 1900

SHOULD BE OPENED.

Elsewhere in this paper is published an account of the excursion trip recently made by the steamer Flora to Frazier falls on Stewart river. As will be noted in the report a large section of that country, including nearly all the territory lying between the mouths of Stewart and McQuesten rivers, has been closed against prospectors.

The ground in question was staked and recorded two years ago, but through failure on the part of the original locators to represent their claims they have reverted to the crown.

In some portions of the territory concerned it is a well known fact that gold in paying quantities has been discovered and in fact it is strongly suspected that substantial amounts of gold have already been taken from ground which is legally closed against all prospecting.

As will be noticed in the report it is the probable intention of the government to place all this reserved ground on the market to be closed off to the highest bidder, as has been done in the case of other crown claims.

This method of disposing of such property is to our way of thinking absolutely wrong—unfair to the government and the prospector as well. The prices realized on former occasions when crown claims have been offered for sale were for the most part so insignificant as to stamp the property sold, so far as concerns the average investor, as being practically without value. When a claim is sold for a dollar or a similar amount, not only is the government the actual loser but the territory in the neighborhood of the claim so sold must also suffer in consequence. In such instances men will often buy a block of claims for almost no consideration and being but little out of pocket will refrain from working their ground, holding on to it merely for speculative purposes.

We submit that the sale of reserved ground by public auction should cease and such ground thrown open to location by the legitimate prospector who goes into the field with the expectation of devoting his energies to opening up and developing such ground as he may locate. The crown dues for recording and representation would then be guaranteed with the added probability that the ground would be immediately prospected and its value demonstrated. The government, in assuming the role of auctioneer, is getting into decidedly small business.

WHY IT IS DELAYED.

According to the telegram sent by the secretary of the governor general to the citizens' committee the election for two members of the Yukon council should come off immediately. There can be no reason advanced for delaying the election other than a desire on the part of certain members of the council to postpone as long as possible any concession to the wishes of the people of the territory. The promise was made by the premier in open parliament that an election would take place within a very short time after the 1st of July. Had the local representatives of the Dominion government a sincere desire to see the promises of the premier carried into effect there would be no difficulty found in effecting the necessary preliminaries.

It is absurd to contend that so important a matter as an election of two members for a territorial legislative body should be indefinitely delayed by reason of the fact that two members of that body now happen to be on a pleasure trip. Telegraphic communication with Ottawa ought to serve to settle the matter without delay, if the authorities wished it so settled.

There is a shrewd suspicion abroad, however, that postponement for a month or two is required to bring certain elements into the field, which at the present time are barred from participating in the election.

That such tactics will prove a boomerang in the long run there can be little doubt. The people have the votes and they will place in the council the men whom they deem best qualified to serve them. The attitude of the council in postponing the election merely adds to the disfavor in which that body as at present constituted is generally held.

Col. Steele's New Commission.

Durban, Natal, July 4.—The expedition planned for the flying column of Strathcona's Horse, under command of Lieut.-Col. Steele, from Kosi Bay through Jongaland and Swaziland into Transvaal territory, has been abandoned for the present, and the transports Wakool and Columbia, which carried the troops from Cape Town, have returned from Kosi Bay to this port for further orders. Although the route and purpose of the expedition had seemingly been kept a strict secret to others than the commanding officer and the military authorities, the whole expedition has been "blown," as a telegram from Sir Alfred Milner to Lieut.-Col. Steele very tersely expresses it.

The regiment had orders to disembark at Kosi Bay and march with all possible haste in a northwesterly direction through Jongaland and Swaziland to Barbarton, and from there on to Kamati Poort, a junction point on the Delagoa Bay railway in the Transvaal Republic just on the border of the Portuguese territory. After destroying the railway the troops were to entrench themselves upon a hill close by, affording a commanding position over the line, and prevent it being reopened for traffic. Here they were to remain entrenched until the second column, composed of A and B squadrons, under command of Major Belcher, which had disembarked at Durban and moved on to Nashai, Zululand, came to their relief. The two columns were then to cooperate together under orders from headquarters. It is therefore seen that it was a risky task, which the Canadians were entrusted with, Lord Roberts having personally admitted so, but at the same time saying that if it was to be done, the Canadian Mounted Infantry was the force to do it. The expedition meant a forced march of 130 miles, the most of it over a very mountainous country, with the possibility of encountering the enemy in large numbers towards the end of the journey. All this with no place of retreat, made it a most hazardous undertaking. But Lieut.-Col. Steele, with his well known intrepidity and courage, and with confidence in his men, accepted it.

However, shortly after the troopships had cast anchor alongside the cruiser Doris, in Kosi Bay, and while preparations for disembarkation were in progress, a gunboat brought a telegram stating that the Boers had got wind of the game, and in the country through which it was proposed to march the Boers had already gathered in force to oppose our advance. Within 30 miles of the point of disembarkation, 400 of the enemy were awaiting our approach; near Barbarton was another force of similar strength, and at Kamati Poort, where it was proposed to blow up the railway, as many as 800 Boers had entrenched themselves on the very hill, which the Strathconas intended to occupy, and had made themselves secure in their entrenchments by placing wire entanglements around the hill.

With the country so infested with the enemy, it took but a short time to decide that an advance would be a foolhardy step. A small force of 200 men to start on such an expedition without any support to fall back on in case of a reverse, would stand an excellent chance of being cut to pieces. Col. Steele wired to the militia authorities at Cape Town, that he would land his men and march according to orders, but would not accept the responsibility of the consequences. The next afternoon the order came to sail back to Durban, as the expedition planned was now a hopeless undertaking with so small a force.

Up to this time on Sunday afternoon the men had no idea of the work they would be required to perform after disembarkation. Just before the transports weighed anchor for the return trip to

Durban the non-commissioned officers and men were collected together in the men's quarters and in secrecy Major Jarvis, commanding B squadron, informed them of the object of the expedition and why it was necessary to abandon it. Needless to say, the troopers were all much disappointed, and while a few expressed the opinion that they could succeed, the majority agreed that it was hopeless to attempt to face an enemy of such overwhelming odds.

At 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon, immediately after Major Jarvis had addressed the men, the transports sailed for Durban, arriving here early this afternoon.

While the troopships were lying at anchor in the harbor this afternoon, awaiting orders to disembark, a tug pulled up alongside the Wakool and an officer boarded the troopship with a message for Col. Steele. Soon after Col. Steele boarded the tug and went ashore. The message, as was afterwards ascertained, was from Gen. Buller and requested the officer commanding Strathcona's Horse to meet him at Pietermaritzburg, the Natal capital, 60 miles distant from Durban. Col. Steele left Durban on a special train. It is an interesting fact that Gen. Buller and Col. Steele are old friends, the latter having served with the former in the Red River expedition of 1869.

An Unshaken Believer.

They're tearing down the castles we've erected in the air, they claim that Brother Damon never flourished anywhere, they tell us that the story of his friendship with a myth, but I believe in Damon, and I've faith in Brother Pyth, they cite us facts and figures, claiming it's a fairy tale, of the residence of Jonah in the inside of the whale, and they say that Billy Tell did not take snap shots at his son, but I believe the stories, I believe 'em every one.

They try to prove that Sheridan could not have "saved the day," they say he didn't ride like mad from "twenty miles away," but I put my trust in it—I'm content to go it blind, I've just as firm belief in it as if I rode behind, I pin my faith to every one of all the good old tales, I've confidence in all the men, the horses and the whales, they cannot break my idols, they cannot spoil my fun, for I believe the stories, I believe 'em every one.

A Serenade of Wolves.

In the Century Ernest Seton-Thompson, who used to be known as "Wolf" Thompson from his familiarity with this particular form of wild animal, tells how he started a wolf serenade at the National zoo in Washington.

While making these notes among the animals of the Washington zoo I used to go at all hours to see them. Late one evening I sat down with some friends by the wolf cages in the light of a full moon. I said, "Let us see whether they have forgotten the music of the west." I put up my hands to my mouth and howled the hunting song of the pack. The first to respond was a coyote from the plains. He remembered the wild music that used to meander pickings for him. He put up his muzzle and "yap yapped" and howled. Next an old wolf from Colorado came running out, looked and listened earnestly, and, raising her snout to the proper angle, she took up the wild strain. Then all the others came running out and joined in, each according to his voice, but all singing that wild wolf hunting song, howling and yelling, rolling and swelling, high and low, in the cadence of the hills. They sang me their song of the west, the west; they set all my feelings aglow; they stirred up my heart with their artless art. And their song of the long ago. Again and again they raised the cry and sang in chorus till the whole moonlit wood around was singing with the grim refrain—until the inhabitants in the near city must have thought all the beasts broken loose. But at length their clamor died away, and the wolves returned, slunk back to their dens, silently, sadly, I thought, as though they realized that they could indeed join in the hunting song as of old, but their hunting days were forever done.

Same old price, 25 cents, for drink, at the Regina.

Neatly furnished rooms. The Criterion.

It might pay you to drop in and see the new stock of drugs, stationery and sundries at the Pioneer Drug Store.

The liquors are the best to be had, at the Regina.

Prices reduced. Shirts now 50c, collars 15c, cuffs, per pair, 25c. Cascade Laundry.

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No better in Dawson for home comfort and cleanliness.....

Beds, \$1.00. Meals, \$1.00.

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