

THE KLONDIKE NUGGET.

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DAWSON, N. W. T., SATURDAY, JULY 9, 1898

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Extra Edition! DOMINION IS OPEN

Order Issued Rescinding the Permit Proposition

MAJOR WALSH EVIDENTLY IM- POSED UPON BY HIS SUBORDINATES

Those Who Had the "Tip" Stampeded Last Night

While Those Who Awaited Patiently the Commissioner's Pleas- ure to Allow Them to Prospect There Are "In the Soup" —The Rottenest Piece of Business and Rankest Injustice the Gold Commissioner's Office Has Yet Perpetrated.

"There's music in the air."
For days and weeks all eyes have been turned toward Dominion creek as the place most likely to furnish the claim that would give them their homestead. One disappointment and delay has followed another, until the last order of the gold commissioner has raised the blood of a long suffering people to fever heat. Major Walsh says he is sick of the whole business. His exact words are: "The administration of affairs on Dominion creek have been a mess from start to finish, and I am sick and tired of the whole business."

Good for Major Walsh! He has practically admitted that which the people have known for, lo! these many days, viz.: That the gold commissioner is incompetent to fill the office he now holds.

Be he ever so honest himself, the gold commissioner's office has been conducted in such a manner as to give evidence of much crooked work. Information that the public should have as soon as anybody, has been given out on the quiet by someone to friends, and those friends have taken the information thus surreptitiously gained and located for themselves that which has been denied the honest prospector.

As evidence of the shortsightedness of the gold commissioner and his ill-advisers, the muddle over Dominion creek is sufficient.

Against the methods of doing business adopted by that office the people stand no show whatever. They never know "where they are at." For example, read what follows:

For the past ten days convenient posting places in the city and along the trails have borne the following notice:

NOTICE!—All hill claims located on Dominion Creek, in the Indian River Mining Division, since November 15, 1897, will not be recognized by the Gold Commissioner. Permits to prospect hill claims on Dominion Creek can be procured from the Gold Commissioner's office, on July 11th, prox., at 10 a. m. No persons will be allowed to prospect hill claims on Dominion Creek, who have not obtained such permits. All parties wishing to locate will be required to find a suitable prospect before they will be permitted to record.

On the afternoon of the 8th inst. stampeded became more active than usual. Among the number that were

hurrying over the hill were many who are always "on the inside." In other words, they have the means, or keen scent, of securing public information before it becomes public. THE NUGGET man at once "scented a mouse," and began to hunt up the meaning of the early stampede. It didn't take long to find out how it started. A high official had given a friend the "tip"—how many more, Lord only knows. Other attaches had done the same, and these friends had told others; until, at three o'clock this morning 1,100 people had crossed the Klondike, on the way to Dominion, and among the number were two NUGGET men, who will have some good reading when they come back.

But here is the most astounding fact of all. If it isn't direct evidence of rottenness, or incompetency approaching criminality, what is it?

The following notice was posted on the 7th—the first one being tacked up about 6:00 a. m., while the notice is dated the 8th. To any sane man don't it look like this was intended to protect the stampeders of a day before the notice became public? Read the notice:

NOTICE.—The notice recently issued regarding permits to be given July 11, 1898, is hereby cancelled and the following substituted:

Hill and bench claims on Dominion creek are now open for location and prospecting by all free miners.

Those claims shown in the appended sketch, with one exception, will be open only to those who made application for them prior to the completion of the survey, which applications are filed in the office of the gold commissioner. By order.

THOMAS FAWCETT,
Gold Commissioner.
Dated, Dawson, July 8, 1898.
[Here follows sketch of Dominion creek.]

For three days have those on the inside been quietly wending their way to the scene of the present stampede. From nowhere else than headquarters could the knowledge of this proposed action of the commissioner have been gleaned. Only those near to the gold commissioner's office could get this knowledge of an impending proclamation days before it was officially decided upon. They alone will reap the benefit and get the claims.

The knowledge of the intended action of the gold commissioner was handed about with admonitions of the utmost secrecy; but every man coming into possession of the news also had his own

circle of immediate friends, and nearly twelve hours before the posting of proclamation No. 2, the stampede had reached such proportions that the crowds of stampeders could not be handled by the ferry-boat—a large scow—across the Klondike river on the Bonanza trail.

The pretense that the new order was simply to prevent anarchy, disorder and possible bloodshed, is shown to be a very chimera by the issue of a third proclamation this morning at about 9:30, showing that the very condition of affairs said to be the desire of the department to prevent is actually being brought about by their own policy of vacillation.

The new order read as follows:
No certificate (of record) will be issued for a hillside claim on Dominion creek until the lapse of ten days from the date of application therefor, in order that rival claimants for the same ground may be heard.

THOMAS FAWCETT,
Gold Commissioner.
Dated July (No date given) 1898.

Here is the office of the gold commissioner congested with unfinished business and the half of every day taken up by the commissioner in hearing rival claimants to various pieces of ground—some of the cases taking up the better part of a week—and here is an open invitation for hundreds of more disputes brought about by the worst case of incompetent administration that was ever tolerated by a justice-loving Anglo-Saxon people.

Was ever such a policy of intolerable vacillation before forced upon an unsuspecting and confiding people?

Take the case of James Powell, an Australian miner, as an illustration of the case of hundreds of tired and angry men who arrived in town this morning after a walk of 30 or 40 miles in obedience to the gold commissioner's proclamation No. 1. They are actual miners and prospectors and came in to get permits. By obeying the commissioner's orders they have forfeited their every chance of location. Had they been only parasites and hangers on of the office they would have saved themselves a long tramp and also have been able to "get in on the ground floor before the rush" as one official elegantly expresses it. It is a premium on disobedience and obsequence to every one who has tried to live up to the laws. Mr. Fawcett has repeatedly impressed upon the public that perfect impartiality was to be shown with no mercy on speculators.

Was ever such a travesty on "impartial administration"?

Did ever men of our race before submit in silence to such outrageous impositions as are daily being forced upon them?

"The public be damned" appears to be about the policy of those who were presumably placed here merely to protect the RIGHTS of all—not the interests of the ring.

Order No. 1 clears the strip of very much wanted ground on Dominion creek and keeps it clear of bona fide miners who believed their miners' certificates entitled them to prospect and locate on any unclaimed ground wherever found. Fearing that the unjust proclamation would not be sufficient, though posted out at the mines and all through Dawson, by word of mouth from the recorder's office the edict goes forth that no departure from that order will be tolerated. Having gotten the bona fide miners and prospectors off this vacant ground the information is allowed to percolate through "ways that are dark," and "tricks that are vain" into the hands of those "near to the throne" who are advised that though the date of the opening of Dominion creek is fixed for July 11th they will be allowed to stake and claim ground after midnight of July 7th.

It is the morning of July 9, actually more than a day after the virtual opening of the creek, that the knowledge of this action is made public by proclamation.

The backbone of Klondike—the vein and sinew of the district—namely the miners and prospectors, have been outraged as never before in the history of the country. "Our incorruptible and brainy officials" have proved but gods of clay, and their worshippers are in sackcloth and ashes at the destruction of their idols—unless the worshippers are on the "inside" and have lined their nests in this latest proof of official incompetence and ignorance of the duties they were here to perform.

Why was not Major Walsh's advice taken and proclamation No. 2 held over, at the very least, until the date of proclamation No. 1?

Does not the recorder know that two wrongs can never make a right? and that if the closing of Dominion creek was wrong it has now assumed the proportions of a gigantic fraud and as such is resented bitterly by the thousands and thousands of right-thinking and right-loving people now occupying the Yukon District.

The people now turn to Major Walsh, the supreme authority in this district, to show them they have one friend left. They know he is incorruptible and above all things else wants to be fair. They know he has been ill-advised by the incompetents who have been in the country much longer than he and should be able to advise. This last outrage should be sufficient to convince the Administrator that the people have good grounds for complaint and are fully justified in asking him redress. As a friend of the people, now is the time to act.

We learn as we go to press that Major Walsh, on behalf of the government, has given \$5,000 for the benefit of the hospital. A straw shows which way the wind blows, and his sympathies being with the people, they simply ask for justice.

HE HAS THE POWER.

Major Walsh Can Do Away
With the Royalty.

HIS POWER SEEMS ABSOLUTE.

By His Order Royalties Have Been
Remitted.

And He Admits That He Has the Power to Wipe Out All
Royalties If Convinced That Any Royalty Whatever
Is an Injustice.

It will be news to Dawsonites to learn that right here at home, without appeal to Ottawa, the much abused royalties could be abolished if the Commissioner of the Yukon was once convinced of their injustice and oppression. The following interview, courteously granted the NUGGET man by Major Walsh, is a volume of information in itself:

"Major, we understand that you have been remitting royalties on claims, where it was shown they were working a hardship or injustice, and we would like to ask you the following questions: Among your other powers, has the power been given you to remit any and all royalties, if such should be found unfair, oppressive, and working an injury to the district?"

"Yes, I have been remitting royalties, as you know, when such has been shown to be oppressive."

"Then, if it should be shown you that all royalties were oppressive and working an injustice, you could yourself abolish that regulation?"

"I am quite satisfied the government would support me even if I remitted all."

The Major protested that it was the last thing in the world the government desired, to oppress the people of this district. The object of giving him such extensive powers was largely to obviate our long distance from the seat of government. Immediately relief could be given where any wrong was made apparent. As an example of the exercise of that power he cited the giving back to the claim owners on Dominion creek the alternate claims held for the crown.

"Are the claims on which royalties have been remitted quite numerous?"

"Yes, quite numerous. Not a man who appeared before this office with a statement has been charged a cent. Some have even shown a balance in their favor; but nothing was exacted."

The Commissioner then went on to state that all the royalties collected would not even pay the police bill of the district. He had seen money come over their shoulders and asked if such a condition of safety were not worth paying for. He dilated on the unfairness of asking the Manitoba farmer to contribute to the support of this gold-bearing region. In case of the abolishing of the royalty he was sure of the objections of the common mine laborer to pay a poll or license tax of \$30 a head. Yet revenue must be raised.

"Major, if the government disposed of its block of claims, would not that prove a source of revenue?"

"Yes, certainly, that would help out; but the government has not any claims on Dominion to amount to anything. There are some on Swede creek and such streams."

Mr. Walsh then went on to state that the royalty collected up to date amounted to but \$250,000, though there was more to come yet. It would not pay for policing the district.

"I think the time will come," he continued, "when new and better methods will be pursued and this district will be shown up in all its richness. Hills will be denuded of their soil by sluicing and the raising of revenue will be simplified. You will undoubtedly have your own government next spring and everything will be put in order. You will also have your own town government, as I shall recommend, when I get to Ottawa."

"Then, there is truth in the rumor that you accepted your position of commissioner for but one year and would shortly be leaving here?"

"I leave here in two or three weeks. I only accepted the position for a year, and while I do not regret coming I would not stay under any consideration. I have been favorably impressed, both on the trail and on arriving here with the class of men who are swelling our population, and have so reported at Ottawa."

The commissioner then went on to state that he hadn't the slightest doubt but the government would adjust all these matters, to the complete satisfaction of the people.

"Major, you are undoubtedly aware that many of our population are daily falling sick and that the authorities have contributed absolutely nothing to the relief of their destitution. Can no assistance be given our hospital?"

"There has got to be a provision made to do something for the hospital. I have thought the matter over, but have decided to wait for local government."

"It appears to be the impression of a large number of people here, that the main trouble with the country here is excessive taxation, and—"

"How can that be so when the tax, whenever excessive, has not been exacted?"

"Is it just that the miner should have to defray all the expenses of the district? Do not the duties, the licenses, the timber permits or berths and the other sources of revenue render this obnoxious royalty a superfluity?"

"No, hardly so. The customs are not nearly so great as you might imagine, a great amount of the goods coming in under bond from Canadian ports. Then again the duties are a fund separate from ours. Only when the funds of the international department are exhausted can we draw on the general fund to which the duties go."

