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THE

OWL.

A PAPER DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF CASSIAR.

VOL. I.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 1876.

No. 1

SALUTATORY.

We will not pretend to argue that the interests of the people of Victoria demand the publication of a third paper in this community; although we might, with a fair show of reason, offer this as an excuse for our appearance. We will not even presume to solicit a share of that patronage which has for years flowed so uninterruptedly into the pockets of our two big contemporaries. But taking the head line which appears under the title we have assumed, as suggestive of the object which calls us into existence, we believe our mission to be a legitimate one; and in making our bow before the public we announce it as our intention to watch carefully and persistently the proceedings of the present Legislative Assembly in behalf of the mining district of Cassiar; a district which, although as regards revenue and population, forms no inconsiderable portion of this great Dominion, is to-day without a representative—without a voice in the councils of the country, and as completely ignored and isolated as if its people were a colony of imbecile savages whom no law could benefit and no mission christianize. We are fully conscious of the task before us; but keeping constantly in view the object of our mission, we intend our course to be honest and straightforward. We confess, to a certain de-

gree, our ignorance of parliamentary usages and the workings of legislative bodies. We know little of Court etiquette and care less. We admit our inability to follow correctly the labyrinth of lines which divide the political opinions of those who to-day are occupying seats in the Legislative Assembly as the representatives of the people; but coming as we do from a district whose teachings are the teachings of nature—whose principles are written on mountain, rock and stream, and where men's lives are judged by their actions and dealings with their fellow-men, we are, perhaps, as capable of distinguishing between right and wrong, of holding the balance of justice as evenly as any of the gentlemen who are the authorized occupants of seats in the hall over James Bay. And when it comes to "washing up" and sluicing the precious metal from that useless dross so well known to all miners, we will not even admit our equal. It will therefore be seen that our duty shall be to pan out the actions of the present Legislature and cast aside the black sand, no matter on which side it is found. Our reporters will fill the galleries, and day and night the shift shall be kept on and the watch remain unbroken. We may be severe in our criticisms of the actions of members, but being the representative of straight forward matter-of-fact men, and when in the opinion of our constituents we fail to be just, we expect not merely to resign our position as conductor of this journal, but that the editorial chair shall be pulled from under us in such a manner as to leave no inclination on our part ever to resume it.

The inhabitants of Cassiar would require to be "long-suffering and slow to wrath," did they not give vent to many a fierce anathema against the Postal Authorities, for that most miserable caricature, called a mail service, allotted to them. On looking over the Province we find every settlement (many of them numbering not a tithe of the inhabitants of Cassiar, few equaling, and none surpassing it in productiveness), with their regular weekly or monthly mail. Yet Cassiar is *again* left for a whole winter—for five weary months—without any public communication with the outside world. Just fancy, in a country pretending to be civilized, two hundred of its pioneers risking the vigors of that cold northern climate, endeavouring to develop its resources, yet denied the common privilege of a mail.

On whose shoulders can we place the blame?

Were the postal affairs of the Province vested in the Provincial instead of the Federal Government, this neglect would be the fruitful source of many a cry against them.

As the Owl is our only representative at present, it is through its columns alone our wants can be made known, and we intend they *shall* be known.

There is no possible excuse for the gross neglect with which we have been treated for the last two winters, and even in summer the mail service was uncertain and inefficient.

Our demands are by no means unreasonable.

During the summer a monthly mail, regularly, and without those unnecessary delays we have had to bear hitherto, and two winter trips, one say in December, and another in February, would be amply sufficient for the present requirements of the district.

If the Post Office Inspector, in giving out the contract, will keep this in view, he will earn the gratitude of a much neglected community.

The great gun of Athlone fired a terrific shot at the C. Q. D. on Monday last.

The gun was charged to the muzzle with the (all important) question as to why the Government deprived one Mr. Jorley of the privilege of collecting eggs in Cow-itch-'em District.

We can assure our readers that the Government was as much astonished as if a Chinese fire-cracker had exploded in the midst of a Cabinet Council. It is to be hoped that the C. Q. D. can give a satisfactory reason for such an arbitrary proceeding, or the country may be put to the expense of a new election.

MUNICIPAL.

We are pleased to learn that the Mayor intends to conduct the proceedings of the City Council on the basis of courtesy and gentlemanly conduct.

We sincerely trust the Councillors will sustain him in his laudable endeavor, and that their style of language may become a pattern for future legislative bodies.

NOTICE.—Any restaurant or saloon-keeper supplying our reporters, after 12 p.m., with refreshments, will please send their bills, "certified," to the office of the Chief Editor, at the "Owl's Nest." Our reporters may be easily recognized by their Owlish look of wisdom, and will invariably give the password before partaking. For the information of the above class of citizens, the password will be "ho, boo, h-o-o," prolonging the sound on the last syllable. N. B.—No bill paid unless certified.

We regret to observe that one of our city members is still in leading strings, and must appeal to his papa when his medical nurse will not advise him.

WANTED.—A lever to move the three Graces from the bunch-grass country, or their constituents will suffer.

JANUARY 19th, 1876.

The Speaker took the chair at 2 p.m.; all the members present.

Mr. Willie presented a petition from "The Victoria and Esquimalt Railway Company." Seeing there is no probability of a railway being constructed from Esquimalt to Nanaimo, they are determined to have one of their own.

The Premier moved that the House do now stand at ease for the purpose of considering the propriety of traveling by the C. P. Railway.

The hon. gentleman, in a voluminous explanation, informed the House that owing to the Dominion contractors not having completed their contract, in his opinion it was unsafe at the present time to travel over the road.

The Rev. Mr. Disher from Queer-malt, in a cloudy speech, endeavored to excuse the contractors, stating that he had no confidence in the parties wishing to ride over the road.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

The Big Gun of Ashlone asked the Chief Quill-Driver why he had the audacity to discharge Mr Jorley from the position of Egg Collector for the district of Cow-itch-ham.

Answer—Because he was afraid he would suck them.

Mr. Rurey asked what were the causes that led to the removal of A. W. Mith from a similar position in one of the Cow counties.

Answer—Mr. Mith, when in Victoria, told the C. Q. D. that he did not give a damn whether he ever collected an egg or any other vegetable.

WE have received copies of the reports of the various Departments; owing to a press of business we have not had leisure to express an opinion as to their merits.

WANTED.—The inventive genius of some person is required to construct a trap for the purpose of catching a wild *Fisher*.

We attended, what the *Colonist* facetiously names the Italian Opera. We are astonished to see the Editor of that well known journal lending himself to praise such performances.

We consider the whole thing an outrage upon the taste and good sense of the people of Victoria. Our citizens have been surfeited with "Bilks" of late, and it is high time the press should discountenance them. We trust that in future, conductors of public journals in this city will endeavor to post themselves thoroughly on the ability of persons who may come here to give entertainments for the amusement of the citizens before they *pull*.

SCENE in the gallery of the Legislative Assembly, just after the Speaker had taken the chair:

(Young man, a stranger, and evidently a disciple of Hammond)—
"Ridiculous, don't they open the House with prayer?"

(Gruff old farmer from Victoria District)—"They does the praying after the House is opened—*they prays on the country!*"

TIME.—We do not know whose business it is to regulate the number of hours constituting a "shift" on the big claim over the Bay, but would suggest that the gathered intellect of the country be less sparing of their valuable time, if for nothing more than appearance sake. On Monday last, about fourteen of our reporters scarcely got their pencils sharpened, when the House was adjourned.

STERN CHASE.—In the debate on the railway question on Wednesday last, the leader of the Opposition informed the leader of the Government that "he (Mr. Smithe) only waited an opportunity to get after him." The hon. Premier replied, "that he had no objection, whatever, but that the chase would always be a stern one, he would never catch up to him."

WANTS.

The deplorable *Pacific* disaster has left our district without a Gold Commissioner, and if rumor is correct, there are not a few who have made application for this most important position.

We do not presume to dictate to the Government as to their selection in filling this office, but if they have the desire to gratify the Cassiar miners they will look more to capacity and experience than to political favoritism.

As we intend unsparingly to censure where censure is merited, we must also be equally just in giving praise when earned.

The Hon. Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works has our thanks for his prompt action in providing for the reconstruction of the bridges over the first and second North Forks, before the beginning of the packing. Let him now remember that there is a trail (in very bad order), between Telegraph Creek and Dease Lake, — and remembering, make provision.

Two other great necessities we would call the honorable gentleman's attention to: First—The necessity of a trail up Thibert's Creek, from the end of the present trail to a point some eight miles up, to where last Fall some good prospects were got, and a large quantity of ground preempted. We would not advocate any large or definite amount being set apart for this, but would simply suggest something reasonable should be placed at the disposal of the Gold Commissioner for this purpose; which, if insufficient, could easily be augmented by private subscription from interested parties, the same as we have done on Dease Creek the past season. Second—The absolute want of a trail from Thibert's to McDames Creek. This is only required for the purpose of driving beef cattle or loose animals, and although the distance is upwards of sixty miles. A small appropriation would be sufficient for the purpose.

We would strongly urge that this latter work should be done early in the season.

SCANDAL.

Messrs. Trimble and Douglas have brought themselves prominently before the country in their most scandalous correspondence in our two daily contemporaries for a few days past. There is no reasonable man can think otherwise than that there is a glaring falsehood on one side or another. To us it is a matter of perfect indifference which gentleman is a paragon of truth, and which must of necessity be diametrically the opposite.

We can only look at the positions of the two members as representatives of the same constituency, one of them holding the highest place in the Legislative body, and in taking this view of the case we can only express our strong disapprobation of the course pursued by both, which, in our opinion, amounts to a most glaring act of discourtesy to their constituents, and to the House wherein they sit.

The House would only be doing right did it call on the two members to purge themselves from the stigma of this falsehood before allowing them to take their seats again amongst those who ought to be above suspicion.

QUESTIONS.—Mr. Disher asked the Premier the following question: "If it was true that the Local Government intended sending the initial stake of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway to the United States Centennial, and if so, would the work of pulling up the stake be let by contract."

"NO SURRENDER."—As the discussion of the Railway Terms will be brought before the House to-day, we sincerely hope that no dissention will take place, and that the "Carnarvon Terms" will be sustained in their entirety.

SHORTLY to be published, an old song by a new author, W. A. Fowel, "I'd be a butterfly."

THE OWL will be published at such times as will suit the convenience of the Editor.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—All communications must be addressed to the Editor of the OWL, Box 200, Victoria Post-office.

No notice whatever will be taken of anonymous communications.