

The Douglas Island News

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BONUS ON GOLD

The bill to put a bonus of \$10 an ounce on gold that is used in manufacture and arts has been reported favorably in committee and there is every indication that it will pass.

If this bill becomes a law, it will be the greatest thing that ever happened to Alaska in general and Gastineau Channel in particular.

Its effect will be so far-reaching that we would not be surprised that it would put a new lease of life in Douglas Island.

The passing of this bill would mean that the gold in the great ore bodies that are under the hills surrounding Gastineau Channel will be worth just fifty per cent more the day after the bill is signed than it was the day before. It will mean that mines in this vicinity that have been having a struggle for existence will be on a paying basis.

It would mean that the vast store-house of gold in the broken and unbroken rock of the great Treadwell, Mexican and 7000 mines of Douglas Island that are now flooded with the waters of Gastineau Channel, could be salvaged and worked at a profit. The increase in the value of the gold after it was produced would more than pay for the work necessary to again make these mines great producers.

The law would stimulate the whole gold mining industry, not only of Alaska but the rest of the country, and would, as a matter of simple justice to gold miners, be no more than right.

Every other metal and product of the soil and earth has advanced, many of them several hundred per cent. Why should the gold miner be discriminated against? The gold miner is the man who won the war. By the gold produced from the mines of America the United States was able to finance the allies and bring the war to a victorious conclusion.

The law as proposed would put gold miners on a preferred list. They would sell their product to the government at an increase in price of \$10 an ounce more than they now get. It is estimated that this \$10 an ounce would just about take care of the higher cost of production. It would not mean that the gold producer would be profiting but that he would be getting, comparatively the same price for his product as he was getting before the war.

Let's all pull for the bonus on gold and new era of prosperity for the gold mining industry of the country.

SHIPPING BOARD

The Territorial Shipping Board, after many months of work on the subject, have evolved a plan which in our minds should improve and cheapen the steamship service to Alaska.

The plan, briefly stated, is a tax of three dollars a net ton on every vessel of over twenty net tons operating in Alaskan waters. This tax would compel the private corporations that now own and control seventy-five per cent of the tonnage to Alaska, to pay this tax which they are now free from.

The money so raised would be placed in a development fund, which fund would be used for improving the service on regular routes of travel. Steamers would be routed with no side trips that evolve loss of time and make the cost to shippers at regular points of call greater. Smaller local lines would be built up through encouragement from this fund and these steamers would take supplies from the regular points of call of the larger steamers, to the outlying points.

This method, in our minds, would not only cause the freight rates to the centers of population to be lower, but would assure a regular mail, passenger and express serv-

ice to the regular points of call, as is the rule of Canadian vessels.

With a regular schedule assured, the post office department would, without a doubt, give the steamship companies a mail contract, which should also tend to lessen freight and passenger rates.

The idea of public ownership has been abandoned on account of the great opposition to the scheme and to our mind the substitute method is even better than the first plan.

The plan in a nut shell is to make those large corporations who reap the benefits of regular transportation lines while operating their own carriers, help pay for the convenience that regular schedules of steamers give to Alaska. It would put passenger vessels on few-stop schedules and encourage building up of points of supply at the centers of population for the outlying camps and canneries.

The plan is a good one and worthy of the consideration of every Alaskan and everyone interested in Alaska.

Delegate George B. Grigsby is proving to be an energetic representative of the people of Alaska at Washington. Only recently, when the different cities of the Territory united in protesting against the abolishment of the office of surveyor-general, he led the fight for the retention of the office. He and associates not only won out, but Delegate Grigsby got a boost in the expense account to buy needed sundries for the office of the surveyor general in Alaska. Mr. Grigsby not only got what he wanted, but got Congress to raise the ante.

A bill has been introduced in Congress that would create a development board for Alaska. This board would reside in Alaska. It would eliminate the complex system of red tape and the many bureaus which Alaska is at the present time encumbered. If it would do just that, it would be a good thing. What the old-timer would like to see in Alaska is less bureaus and more sideboards. He would like to see less red tape and more real development.

Although the Territorial political pot has started to boil and the politician is abroad and in our midst, we have yet to hear of anyone announcing his candidacy for any city office. This year there will be a chance for plenty of would-be politicians to break into the game right in their own home town.

Since the plunge of the oil locators into the wilderness of Western Alaska after the signing of the oil land leasing bill by President Wilson, we have heard nothing more about the stampede. As yet we have not heard the magic words, "She's a cusher."

The cannery men's decision to restrict their packs is a wonderful thing. It is a beautiful sentiment. We only hope that there is not a big salmon run in Alaska this year. Knowing Alaska cannerymen as we do, we would hate to see them tempted too strongly.

With Yukon absolutely dry, much of the joy of Victoria Day excursion from the American side to Whitehorse will be done away with. We predict that in the future there will not be such a stampede to make the trip as there was last year.

It was no surprise that Major Hugh Caldwell was elected mayor of Seattle. The surprise was that so many people voted for Dumeau.

Last week we were getting ready to pick violets and this week we are busy picking icicles out of our whiskers. Such is life in Alaska.

Much of the joy of traveling has been taken away by the law that will prohibit coastwise steamers from carrying liquors.

March so far has proved to be a roaring lion. Let us hope that the month will prove more lamb-like at the latter end.

The Stroller

BY
E. J. White

Never within the history of man—in fact never within the history of the world—have there been so many different societies, clubs, orders, associations, leagues, fraternities and unions, brotherhoods and sisterhoods as at present, and Alaska has her share of all of them; but there is room for one more, and if present plans materialize there will be more than one organization (that will be more distinct in its personnel and more distinct in its qualifications for membership than any other order, club or society now in existence. It will be truly northern in its scope, embracing only Alaska and Yukon Territory.

The name of the new organization, which is completing all details before applying to the Territorial secretary for a charter, is The Same-Old-Old-Wife Society. It is for men only and none but those who still have the same wives they brought north with them or had twenty years or more ago are eligible for membership in the society. Due to this restriction it has been difficult to secure sufficient eligibles to incorporate as charter members, but the quota has at last been filled and it is expected The Same-Old-Old-Wife Society will become a reality in the very near future. No arrangements for a lodge room or meeting place have as yet been made, but large quarters will not be necessary as the membership will be owing to qualification restrictions, confined to a limited number.

Blank applications for membership in The Same-Old-Old-Wife Society may be had by applying in person to The Stroller. Affidavits as to membership eligibility must accompany the application blanks.

The following letter was received by The Stroller this week:

Dawson, Yukon, Feb. 26, 1929.
Dear Stroller:

As all indications point to an early spring and corresponding early departure of the winter snow, I write to remind you that the time draws near for your semi-annual contribution to the Green Paint fund. You may be pleased to learn that my health is improving and that my span of life bids fair to reach one hundred or more. I am now 98.

Respectfully,
S. O. A. D.

Eighteen years ago this winter at Dawson the Sourest of All Douglas took The Stroller into his confidence and unfolded the story of his life, from which sufficient is herewith given to explain the cause for the letter given above.

"In 1850 I left my home back yander (making it plain that he meant some place in New England, as only New Englanders say "Back Yander") and made my way to Illinois, where I worked one summer on a farm, during which summer the only sleep I had between April and November was when I went to church on Sundays. That winter I shipped on a prairie schooner as bull traver and landed in California the following summer. A year later I joined a whaling crew for the Arctic seas. We stayed too long in the north and the ice caught us, smothering our ship. I alone of the crew of 45 men escaped. After being blown southward on a piece of wreckage for eight days I landed on the northwest corner of the North American continent and made my way across the Alaska Peninsula to the mouth of the Yukon river. While I met with many Indians who would give me what I needed in the way of food and clothing, none of them cared to have me stop long with them. They called me "White Buck" and passed me from one village to another. That is where the expression "Passing the buck" originated. About in the fall of '54 I landed at Nookshite and there I met my affinity in a young squaw called Limpin' Grouse. I was the apple of her eye and she was my strawberry shortcake. For more than 40 years we lived and loved and then she contracted pneumonia one winter while harvesting (sa-worms). It was the winter the blue snow was deeper than I ever saw it. Before she died, Limpin' Grouse asked me to keep her grave green, when it was not covered with snow, so long as I lived. I promised, and in order to keep that promise I visitate I paint her grave every spring and fall during the periods that elapse between the melting of the snow and the coming of the green grass and again in the fall after the grass goes and before snow falls. Now, while the Indians feed and clothe me, they refuse to come across with the price of the paint I require to fulfill my

promise to my dear departed. Can you help me out?"

The Stroller could and did. More than that, as the Sourest of All Douglas was at that time past 80 years of age, the Stroller reasoned that he would not live to decorate the grave of Limpin' Grouse more than another year—two at most—and in a moment of over-generosity he promised to assume the obligation of keeping the paint fund up so long as the old man should require it.

The Stroller's promise as above described was made eighteen years ago, and spring and fall ever since he has contributed two dollars, making four dollars each year for 18 years and now, with \$72 already invested, he receives the news that green paint has not only doubled in price but that the old man has renewed his youth and may continue among those present for several years to come. But the next mail for Dawson will carry a money order for \$4 for, as Service says, "A promise made, is a debt unpaid."

Any how, the Stroller always was a goal.

THE BREEZE

For the benefit of the readers of the Douglas Island News who did not have the opportunity of seeing the last issue of the Gastineau Breeze, the eight-page publication gotten out last Friday by the Student Body Association of the Douglas High School, we are printing much of it in this week's issue of the News.

SHORT OF HELP

Who will keep the lights burning in the lighthouses along the coast of Alaska? That question is troubling the lighthouse service this year for there is a shortage of men, and appeals to the civil service for new ones have failed to get results. To accept a position in the service as a lighthouse tender means isolation, but otherwise every possible comfort is provided and few of the men engaged fail to save a nice stake as they have little chance to spend their savings.

The service is exacting in that it requires good men, dependable and courageous, and the country is being accused for timber of this kind. If they are not found in Alaska, the service may have to send to the States for them, for it is essential that the lights now in existence must be kept in good shape for the safety of navigation depends upon them.—Ketchikan Chronicle.

NOTICE OF HEARING ON FINAL ACCOUNT

In the United States Commissioner's Court, District of Juneau, Territory of Alaska, in Probate. In the matter of the Estate of Frank Suranta, deceased.

Notice is hereby given that the final account of the administrator of the estate of Frank Suranta, deceased, has been rendered to the above entitled court and that Wednesday, the fifth day of May, A. D. 1929, at 10 o'clock A. M., has been duly appointed by said court for the settlement thereof, at which time any person interested in said estate may appear and file his objection, or writing, to said account, and contest the same.

Witness my hand and official seal this 1st day of March, 1929.
(Seal) NEWARK L. BURTON,
United States Commissioner and Ex-Officio Probate Judge.
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SALVAGE BUOY

Going to the Westward, the steamship Cedar of the Lighthouse service will leave Ketchikan tomorrow some time, and will go as far as Cook Inlet, where it is expected that a buoy valued at approximately \$12,000, which broke its mooring and went adrift, is reported to be on the beach.

The Cedar was to have sailed for the south within a few days, but when word was received that the buoy which has been adrift since last November had been sighted new orders were issued. It is said that the buoy drifted some 340 miles or more before landing on a good beach where there was little chance of damaging it.—Ketchikan Chronicle.

For the best and nearest job printing, come to the News office.

REGISTRATION NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the registration books of duly qualified voters in the City of Douglas, will be opened at the office of the City Clerk on the first day of March, 1929, and remain open until the 2nd day of April, 1929, at nine o'clock a. m. Registration hours will be from 10 a. m. to 12 m. and from 2 p. m. to 4 p. m. each day.

Dated this 4th day of February, 1929. (Signed)

THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DOUGLAS, ALASKA.

Elmer K. Smith, Mayor.
Attest: L. W. KILBURN, Clerk.

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