

2nd. Because a Gold export tax of three per cent. has just been imposed on all treasure leaving the Colony, which is in itself a heavy increase upon our former taxes. When to this is added a high tariff on all the necessaries of life, it becomes a burden from which men regarding their best interest will flee when the first opportunity is offered.

It is unwise and impolitic:

1st. Because it will not increase the revenue of the Colony. The great diminution in the amount of imports into the Colony, caused by this tariff will diminish the aggregate revenue so much that there will be a large deficit to be made up next year, when the mining population will be so small under the operation of onerous taxes that it cannot be collected. No direct importations into the country can prevent this result, even if such importations should enable traders to furnish supplies at the same cost that they could have done under the old tariff.

2nd. We believe there are rich deposits of gold in the wildest and most inhospitable portions of the Colony. These gold fields are as yet unexplored and undiscovered; it will require men and capital combined to discover and develop them. In many instances large companies have been organized and other preparations made to send capital into the country for this purpose. This tariff discourages and cripples all such operations by an unfair increase upon all the articles and implements required for their work. Prospecting in the Colony, upon which so much of our future success depends is thus checked if it is not entirely prohibited.

3rd. There are hundreds of men in the Colony who have spent all their means and time during the past three or four years without success. Within the small distance of one and a half miles on Williams Creek, six hundred thousand dollars have been thus spent. These men have experience in the country, they are not altogether discouraged, and they purpose to go again into the mines with the hope that they will yet be able to get something in return for their lost labour and means. This tariff discourages such men, and will force them to gather up their small earnings for the season and leave the country for ever.

4th. The small trader and packer who has invested his means in provisions, and is now on his way or about to start for the Colony, will be compelled to seek another market. He cannot pay a double tariff and compete with those traders now in the country. He will find a better and more profitable market in the neighbouring gold fields of Washington and Idaho territories.

It is unjust and inequitable:

1st. Because the increase in the absolute necessities of life, far exceed that on the luxuries, thus making the laborer in the country bear the main, if not the whole burden of the taxation. As an instance the tariff on beans, one of the principal articles of consumption by the miner is increased from 3 to 20 per cent., while that on ale and porter is only increased from 10 to 40 per cent., the tariff on flour is increased more than threefold, while that on wines is only doubled.

2nd. The tariff is made to take effect at once, thus causing a sudden and quick rise in provisions in the mines just as the season begins. By this means the miner will be forced to pay famine prices in the spring, and perhaps be driven by necessity to leave the country, before he has had a fair chance to go to work profitably. A reasonable notice for the enforcement of such a measure is customary in other countries as it is equitable and fair.

II. *Resolved*, That in our opinion the idea that such a tariff will encourage direct importations to the Colony from distant ports is a fallacy with reference to British Columbia, which has no foundation in reason, and will result in no good to our Colony. The Legislators of British Columbia cannot control the laws of commerce. Such legislation is not more onerous to the consumers of the country than it is impracticable and futile for the purposes for which it was enacted.

III. *Resolved*, That we will hereafter vote for no man who favors an increase of taxation in British Columbia, believing as we do that the burdens of the people of that Colony are greater than they can bear.

IV. *Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be prepared for signature, and when signed by the miners and traders of British Columbia, now in this city, and by none others, they be forwarded to His Excellency Governor Seymour, who is hereby most respectfully requested to lay them before the Honourable Council and Legislative Assembly for their consideration, with this as our prayer, that they will cause the Customs Amendment Act to be revised, to suit the circumstances of the country.

APPENDIX D.

NEW WESTMINSTER,
28rd March, 1865.

GENTLEMEN:—I have had the honor to receive, on the 18th instant, from the hands of the gentleman selected by the people of Cariboo East to represent their interests in the Legislative Council, the petition adopted at a Public Meeting, held in Victoria on the 25th February, 1865. You object to the Customs Ordinance lately passed in forcible terms,