

Tuesday, February 20, 1866.

Union of the Colonies.

BRITISH COLUMBIA PETITION.

To Her Most Gracious Majesty Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Colonies thereunto belonging, Defender of the Faith, &c.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Merchants, Miners, Traders, Farmers, Packers, and others resident in British Columbia, humbly sheweth—

That your Petitioners, having expended a very large amount of capital and labor in exploring and developing the resources of the colony, are deeply interested in its welfare and success;

That in the absence of any reasonable expectations of a commensurate increase in the population or in the wealth of the country to justify new burdens, they view with alarm the great increase in the amount of taxation proposed to be raised this year;

That your Petitioners estimate the resident population of British Columbia during the winter months—exclusive of the Chinese and Indian, who contribute in a very small proportion to the general revenue—at about four thousand persons, and the summer population, leaving the Kootenay district out of calculation, regarding which they have no accurate information, at about seven thousand persons, and by averaging these figures they arrive at five thousand five hundred as the mean population of the country.

In making any calculation of revenue or population they are led to look upon the prospects of Kootenay as too problematical to be taken into consideration in allotting the average share of the general revenue which will be required from each individual resident in the older districts. There may be for a week or two 3000 or 4000 persons at these mines, and there may not be as many hundreds a few weeks later. Again, the license fees and duties collected at the boundary line may give a handsome surplus or they may not exceed the expenses incurred in collection.

That the revenue of British Columbia from ordinary sources is estimated at £153,615 or £27 18s. 6d. per head, as against £110,877 in 1863, when the mean population could not have been less than 6,500 persons.

The number of license fees issued to free miners in that year being 4,066, consequently the proportion of taxation falling upon each individual did not exceed £17 12s.

The total receipts for the present year in aid of revenue, including balance of loan for making roads, bridges and streets, are estimated at £230,255, and the expenditure for 1865 is estimated at £240,525 or £43 14s. 7½d per head, while that of 1863 was only £147,598 and allowing for the more numerous population, was only at the rate of £22 14s. 1½d. per head, or slightly more than one-half.

That this great increase in the burdens of a young country already heavily taxed and with a reduced population must necessarily fall injuriously on the miner, who has to labor in the most inhospitable region of the colony. Further, the climate of Cariboo is such that general mining operations are confined to about four months in a year, and it is only from the profits of this short season that the miner can accumulate the means of living during the winter, and providing funds to meet the demands which the government makes upon him in the forms of a tariff, road tolls, license, recording and other fees, and a heavy tax upon his gold.

That while your petitioners are fully aware of their obligation to contribute towards the support of the government which affords them protection and which they have hitherto done without complaint, they cannot help expressing their conviction that so large an increase of expenditure as is contemplated this year under the head of Civil List, &c., is out of all proportion to the number of the producing population. The total amount of salaries, &c., voted in 1865 being £42,317 against £28,590 in 1863, and with the further sum of £4,825 for traveling expenses, the total for this year is over £47,000.

That your petitioners believe that there are gold fields of vast wealth within the boundaries of British Columbia undiscovered, and which will employ a large population in their development, but these will require energy, industry and enterprise to bring to light, and your petitioners believe that when added to the natural difficulties there are fresh unnecessary and vexatious taxes imposed upon the miners, who are the mainstay of the country, this injurious class will become discouraged and turn their steps to the neighboring gold fields of Washington Territory, Oregon and California.

That your petitioners are fully convinced of the necessity of Legislative Union between British Columbia and Vancouver Island on fair and equitable terms. That the accomplishment of this event, as soon as practicable, is an indispensable requisite for the progress and prosperity of both.

The following are some of the reasons which have led your petitioners to take this view of the relative position of the two colonies—

The mean population of the colony of Vancouver Island cannot be computed at less than 7,500 persons, and this number added to that of British Columbia gives 13,000 as the united population of the two colonies. If the ordinary revenue of each were added together and the taxation allotted fairly amongst the inhabitants of both colonies it would so far equalize the weight of the present burdens as to reduce the share of the miners of British Columbia by at least £10 a year.

These would be nothing unjust in such a redistribution of the burdens of the state, as the prosperity of the miners of Cariboo quite as much as the inhabitants of British Columbia.

The union of the two colonies would also reduce the Civil Lists, which are now bearing heavily on both countries, the staff of officials will be lessened and only one central government would be required.

The people of Vancouver Island have expressed their willingness to unite with the sister colony, and when your petitioners consider the proximity of the two countries and

their mutual dependencies on each other, they cannot but believe that protracted separation will militate against the best interests of both and weaken British influence in this portion of the empire.

Your petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that your most gracious Majesty may be pleased to take such steps as are necessary for an immediate reduction of the expenditure for this colony, and for an early Union of British Columbia and Vancouver Island under one government.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray, &c.

David Oppenheimer Merchant Barkerville

Williams Creek

F Laumeister Merchant Richfield do

J H Todd Merchant Barkerville do

W Hardy Miner Camerontown do

H Edwards Merchant Barkerville do

J W Davis Brewer Barkerville do

Geo Murdock Miner Barkerville do

Alex Jacob Miner Camerontown do

Frank Perret Miner Camerontown do

Victor Jones Merchant Vanwinkle do

Simon May Free Miner Canon Creek do

Robert Beaven Free Miner Lowbee Creek do

Charles Moorson Free Miner do

James Watson Free Miner Williams Creek do

Martin Toomy Free Miner do

Robert McNab Free Miner Camerontown do

F Wilcox Free Miner do

Wm H Jones Free Miner Australian claim do

David Edwards Free Miner Dixie claim do

Wm H Lighthall Free Miner Canadian co do

J Martin Free Miner Grouse Creek do

Robert Burrell Manager Bank B N A Barkerville do

John Buie Merchant Barkerville do

Aaron VanVleck Merchant do

James Burdock Free Miner Stouts Gulch do

Andrew Swain Free Miner Sheepskin claim do

John Boyle Free Miner Boyle claim Lowbee do

Samuel Mitchell Blacksmith Camerontown do

Thomas O'Brien Free Miner do

H Gilmore Blacksmith and Free Miner do

Stouts Gulch do

L G Combs Sawmill Stouts Gulch do

David Watkins Free Miner Australian claim do

O Wolsey Miner Excelsior claim do

F Rose Miner do

Solomon Jones Miner Australian claim do

Thos Besozzi Merchant Barkerville do

John Bassett Miner do

John Humphreys Miner do

T Bows Trader do

Fred Hertlein Brewer do

Lewis Williams Free Miner Australian claim do

Henry Hines Free Miner Never Sweat co do

Nicholas Curry Barkerville do

Charles Millet Free Miner Marysville claim do

Jesse Pierce Free Miner Hit or Miss claim do

Wm Miller Baker Barkerville do

Arthur Riviere Miner do

Godfrey Morton Miner Australian co do

Richard Drew do Bank co do

William Reed do Aurora claim do

F Dibben do Hart co do

John Lewis do Grier claim do

Daniel B Lewis do Baldhead claim do

George Elson do Marysville claim do

John Bryant do Barkerville do

Wm Rankin do Raokin claim do

Thos Murphy do Raby claim do

Wm Carmen do Barkerville do

Wm W Dodd do do

H Trenholm do Artesian claim do

L H Glover do St Andrews claim do

Joseph Devlin do Aurora claim do

Jeremiah W Woods do Camerontown do

James Hart do Welsh co do

Wm Nellis do Aurora claim do

J McIntyre do Barkerville do

Malcolm McLones do Calavarians co do

R G McLoughby do Raccoon claim do

S Piercy do Raby claim do

Stephen McDonald do Barkerville do

Francis McKenny do Williams Creek do

J McNesham Balder Barkerville do

Robert Smith Miner Great Ophir mining co do

James Williams do Barkerville do

Thos McWaters do Camerontown do

Thos Thistlewaite do Barkerville do

John Byrne do Williams Creek

Chas J Adnam do Australian co

Jas Setbridge do do

Peter Sangster do do

Richard Doyle do do

Samuel Cahn Merchant Vanwinkle do

Simon Davis Baker do do

Thos McCormick Miner Caradoc claim Basford creek do

Patrick Gannon Butcher Richfield do

George Mills Miner Aldin do

Robert Vermont do Vanwinkle do

George McLeod do Burnes creek do

Stephen E Edwards Hotelkeeper Vanwinkle do

Wm Vance Blacksmith do do

Patrick Kelley Miner Campbell claim do

Edward John do Black Jack co do

John Rees do do do

Watkin C Price do Williams creek do

Rosser Edwards do Deadbroke claim do

Thos Drulane do Blackpool co do

Michael Keefe do do do

Samuel French Sawyer Williams creek do

Henry H Anderson Miner do do

J B Webster Millwright do do

Wm McInnes Farmer and Trader 59-mile h'se do

James Rogers Miner Curry co do

Samuel Wasley Farmer Clinton do

L J Linfield Cook and Miner 59-mile house do

Thos F Walters Hotelkeeper 93-mile house do

H S Booth do do do

S N Nelson Hotelkeeper and Farmer 100-mile house do

Archibald McKinlay Farmer Lake LaHache do

E Dumont do do do

T Jiard do do do

Sam Murphy Farmer 141-mile house do

Ben Murphy do do do

John Parr Miner Adams claim do

Lewis Walker do and Joiner 141-mile house do

John McGules do 150-mile house do

Cornelius White Laborer do do

David Douglas do do do

Thos Marris do do do

John Duncan Packer and Free Miner Keithley's creek do

Hugh Jones Miner North Wales co do

David Williams do St David claim do

Jeremiah Griffiths do Williams creek do

Wm A Watson Merchant do do

Aaron Johnson Stage agent Mouth of Quesnelle do

Samuel Scott Miner Burnes claim do

Thos Smalley Hotelkeeper Vanwinkle do

T J Menefee Farmer Williams Lake do

Wm Gunnell Butcher Vanwinkle do

H Schorling Merchant do do

Henry Davis Miner Davis creek do

R Hughes Merchant Lowbee creek do

Leopold Ruhn do Williams creek do

John Smith Miner Conklins gulch do

James Munro do Camerontown do

G W Boardman do Williams creek do

Henry Heilbrower Merchant Cunningham creek do

D G Smith Miner Cunningham creek do

S Cancell do Williams creek do

Joseph A Croger do do do

Isaac Hodson do do do

Duncan McMartin do do do

G Pontaine Trader do do do

H A Leoney do do do

O Strouves Merchant Barkerville do

P E Devine Miner Williams creek do

E A Waddam Secretary W C B R Flume do

J C Brunr Trader Williams creek do

R Dazett Butcher Richfield do

Adam Prentice Miner Barkerville do

James Phillips do Williams creek do

Patrick Guilford do Brown claim do

J S Bramley Trader Richfield do

James Roberts Shoemaker do do

S A Smith Saloonkeeper do do

M Whearly Miner Abbot claim do

Samuel Merritt do Enterprise co do

F Cestaniere Housekeeper Richfield do

S W Weston Miner California co do

Thos W Keegan do do do

John Lowe do do do

Peter Fudenski do Richfield do

Henry Jones do Australian claim

James Strain do do

Angus Lamont do Mountain claim

G A Cumber do Barkerville

George Ruder do do

John Stephenson do do

M G Sullivan do do

W Sterling do do

John Bruce do Conklins gulch

Joseph Schmidt do Swift river

Albert Oergant do Antler creek

Edward Mearner do Lowbee

Joseph Park barrister at law Richfield

S T Wales miner Williams creek

J G Marshall do do

B P Anderson do do

J S Murrie do do

H W Williams do do

J Lambert do Richfield

Francois Lallier merchant do

Henry Lamont do do

Charles Florence clerk do

Cheophille Morrell miner do

Manning Victor do do

L Gayet do Grouse creek

David Eynon do Reid claim

A Wap do do

A Ende do do

Baptiste Delaitang barber do

Lewis DeCastro miner do

Wm Heselton do do

Thos Guthrie do do

Michael M Haggarty clerk Quesnelle mouth

Wm Ferron miner Davis co

Robert C Arte do Grouse creek

E L Shaw farmer Cottonwood

Benj Boake miner Grouse creek

George Gilsky farmer Cottonwood

John Emmette carpenter Barkerville

David Williams blacksmith Richfield

Alex Anderson miner Lowbee

T Smith do Petersen creek

A Smith do do

R Ruddell carpenter Williams creek

J Saunders farmer Quesnelle mouth

Peter Stephens miner Williams creek

Thos Emery do do

P Kelly do Reid claim

George Preston carpenter Antler creek

Chas Oppenheimer merchant Yale

R H Young bank clerk Quesnelle mouth

G Hassell farmer do

D Strachemir merchant do

D D Duhig liquor merchant do

A D Fraser miner Grouse creek

Joshua Price do Baldhead claim

B C Hemphill do Antler creek

M Nicholas clerk Quesnelle

L Cohen merchant do

A Hoffmeister trader do

J Jaretheier miner do

T R Buie merchant Lytton

John McIntyre miner do

John Boyle do do

T DeNovion merchant do

J Torst clerk do

G Frauenthal merchant do

G Schmidt shoemaker do

L B Romano merchant do

G Gaglioth do do

Joseph Goodwin saloon keeper Lytton

Chas Joseph Bocher do do

R B Simpson merchant do

H S Kirkpatrick farmer and trader Spences bridge Lytton district

Samuel McLellan clerk Lytton

Nat Morgan packer do

Thos Lytle carpenter do

S P Brown farmer do

L Liantier hotel keeper do

L Allard do do

J E Penny do do

P Shuman teamster do

Daniel Hathorn packer do

Wm McWally do do