

means to adopt for introducing and fostering the immigration of a class of Settlers likely to make this country their home. The opening of new and extensive mining and agricultural districts during the past season, and also of different lines of access to them, offer many and favorable inducements for settlement hitherto unknown. The experience of the last year has clearly shown that the agricultural lands of this Colony are well adapted for the cultivation of cereals and vegetables of all descriptions, and large tracts of the best lands are fortunately most favorably situated for the supply of the principal Mining districts.

I am aware that a numerously signed Petition will shortly be presented to you, emanating from Miners and Traders in the Cariboo District, praying that some alteration may be made in the Mining Laws "to provide for the speedy hearing and determining of all disputes concerning Mining interests." I fully agree with the Petitioners that the present expensive system of litigation is "productive of great injury to the general welfare, progress, and development of the whole mining interests of the Colony." A considerable portion of our last Session was occupied in consolidating and amending the Mining Laws, more especially with a view to remedy the evil of which the Petitioners complain, the Draft Ordinance introduced with this object having been framed under the immediate superintendence of the Mining Board of Cariboo. Although I still believe the Laws at present in force are capable of meeting every requirement, I shall be anxious to give my most attentive consideration to any suggestions you may wish to offer on this important subject, when the Petition is before you.

The Law relating to the Pilotage of Vessels within the waters of British Columbia requires immediate alteration. A Bill with this object will be laid before you.

I shall take the opportunity as the Session progresses of bringing other measures of importance before you by Message.

The absence of crime in the past year is worthy of more than a passing notice. During the extended circuit of the Supreme Court, only two white men were convicted on criminal charges, and the Indian population throughout the Colony has been, I rejoice to say, peaceable and orderly.

Reflecting on the extent and number of our resources so largely added to by the discoveries of the past year, and day by day being developed, I recognize on every side subjects for congratulation and thankfulness, and confidently hope that the year which has just dawned upon us will be one of unusual success. I earnestly invite your cordial co-operation in the passage of those measures best calculated to promote the prosperity of the country, and I fervently trust that He who holds the destiny of nations in the hollow of His Hand will guide our deliberations to a happy issue.