

But I have not quite done with Absolute Rule. Very pleasant to the ruler, most destructive to your interests. Has such administration, assisted by legal wisdom, developed your country and provided A GOOD LAND SYSTEM? Many of us have been in this colony for two years, and yet there is "no publicly proclaimed intelligible, satisfactory Land System." The recent proclamation by the side wind of *clause VII directly favors the Capitalist*. It does not mention what kind of *improvements* will be required; it does not meet the wants of the colony for it does not *encourage immigration*. Of course, no legal functionary could have framed it, for a Proclamation so singularly favorable to *legal speculation* could not be fastened on a Lawyer!

We were led to expect a good deal from the promises, admissions &c. of public functionaries, but their assay value is ascertained fractionally in more than this instance.

It will be contended that nothing will satisfy British Columbians. What we demand, first and foremost, is

1st *Free grants* of land, under the same conditions and provisos as those in force in Canada and New Zealand.

2dly. The reduction of the up-set price of land to Five shillings an acre.

3dly. "*Improvement*" defined and exacted.

We are told that such changes rest with the Home Government—that they have been represented and refused.

I am afraid, Fellow Countrymen and all who desire to settle in British Columbia, that such statements will be received with considerable reservation. Is it to be credited that the Home Government would *not* have granted these wants, had they been sent home as the request of the People, and what they demanded as essential to their own prosperity and the encouragement of Immigration! Do you believe it to be the case that the wants of the colony and the wishes of the colonists have been fairly represented and pertinaciously refused? Have Colonial acts gone so far as to show us that the theory has been held by this colonial government from its commencement, "Population is Wealth, Consumers are Revenue!"

The Governor, in his visit up the river last autumn, expressly advocated these views, and promised his influence with the Home Government in carrying them out. Again I ask, Does the late Proclamation bear out *Promises*? I refer you to the letter which appears at the close of this Address, in which the Proclamation is ably dissected. But let us see what is the Land Policy elsewhere.

In all enlightened countries these first principles are acknowledged and acted up to, in British Columbia they will apparently be the last.

In Texas the Government sold land to settlers as low as 10 cents an acre. In Oregon, the Government clearly saw the difficulties of reaching it and adopted the wise policy, of making for a few years free grants of land to all settlers, *until population was drawn thither and the country became more accessible*.

Canada makes free grants of land in remote places of the Colony. If the land is rich it is coupled with road making as a condition. Some definite improvement is always insisted on and righteously