

10. CORRESPONDENCE *relative to the* DISCOVERY of GOLD in the

No. 7.

No. 7.

COPY of a DESPATCH from the GOVERNOR of VANCOUVER'S ISLAND to the  
Right Hon. H. LABOUCHERE, M.P.

(No. 1.)

Victoria, Vancouver's Island, January 22, 1858.

(Received March 15, 1858.)

SIR,

1. WITH reference to the Proclamation and Regulations legalizing the search for gold in the districts of Fraser's River and Thompson's River, transmitted with my Despatch No. 35, of the 29th of December last, I have now the honour to communicate for your information, that we have since that date raised the licence fee from ten shillings to twenty-one shillings a month, payable in advance, which is the present charge for gold licences.

2. We were induced to make that change through a desire to place a larger amount of revenue at the disposal of Government to meet the expense of giving protection to life and property in those countries, and at the same time from a well-founded conviction that persons really bent upon visiting the gold district will as readily pay the increased as the lower rate of charge.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

JAMES DOUGLAS,

Governor.

To the Right Hon. Henry Labouchere,  
&c. &c. &c.

No. 8.

No. 8.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor DOUGLAS to the Right Hon.  
H. LABOUCHERE, M.P.

(No. 15.)

Victoria, Vancouver's Island, April 6th, 1858.

SIR,

1. SINCE I had last the honour of addressing you in my Despatch No. 35, of the 29th of December last, in reference to the discovery of gold in the Couteau, or Thompson's River District, we have had much communication with persons who have since visited that part of the country.

2. The search for gold and "prospecting" of the country, had, up to the last dates from the interior, been carried on almost exclusively by the native Indian population, who have discovered the productive beds, and put out almost all the gold, about eight hundred ounces, which has been hitherto exported from the country, and who are moreover extremely jealous of the whites, and strongly opposed to their digging the soil for gold.

3. The few white men who passed the winter at the diggings, chiefly retired servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, though well acquainted with Indian character, were obstructed by the natives in all their attempts to search for gold. They were on all occasions narrowly watched, and in every instance when they did succeed in removing the surface and excavating to the depth of the auriferous stratum, they were quietly hustled and crowded by the natives, who, having by that means obtained possession of the spot, then proceeded to reap the fruits of their labours.

4. Such conduct was unwarrantable and exceedingly trying to the temper of spirited men, but the savages were far too numerous for resistance, and they had to submit to their dictation. It is, however, worthy of remark, and a circumstance highly honourable to the character of those savages, that they have on all occasions scrupulously respected the persons and property of their white visitors, at the same time that they have expressed a determination to reserve the gold for their own benefit.

5. Such being the purpose of the natives, affrays and collisions with the whites will surely follow the accession of numbers, which the latter are now receiving by the influx of adventurers from Vancouver's Island and the United States territories in Oregon; and there is no doubt in my mind that sooner or later the intervention of Her Majesty's Government will be required to restore and maintain the peace. Up to the present time, however, the country continues quiet, but simply, I believe, because the whites have not attempted to resist the impositions of the natives. I will, however, make it a part of my duty to keep you well informed in respect to the state of the gold country.