

community, possessing their own government and capital, the old system was found to be manifestly unjust, and your predecessor, listening to the voice of the protesting colonists, effected the separation so joyously received in British Columbia.

5. I say confidently that that Colony has not altered its views. It has had the one great wish gratified and dreads all change. I have heard this denied by Victoria politicians, and I have in vain asked them for any evidence to support their denial. If a desire for union has arisen in the Colony, how does it show itself? The gentlemen who successfully appeal to the people for nomination to the Legislative Council pledge themselves to opposition to union. The Council, on this subject entirely unfettered by me, vote unanimously against it. The issue was fairly tried wherever there was a chance of success. Petitions were printed in Victoria recommending union and the abolition of unpopular taxation and circulated in the mining districts, but they remained unsigned. Indignation meetings were called in Cariboo, but no one would attend. A newspaper was started in that district specially to advocate union and oppose the local government. The miners merely protested against the scurrility of their professed organ, and when extraneous assistance was withdrawn it died from want of their support. I am, for many reasons, anxious that the desire for union should exist in British Columbia. It does not.

6. The efforts of the merchants of Victoria to create such a desire in the mining districts were, however, vigorous and well timed; not very high principled, but showing considerable political dexterity. It was felt that union, as a separate question, could stand no chance of obtaining a hearing in Cariboo, but it might meet with some attention on the hustings, coupled with an abrogation of the export duty on gold, and a general reduction of taxation. Systematic agitation might, possibly, stir up the feeling against the gold tax to a sufficient strength to drag into light its self-imposed associate, union. I do not deny the unpopularity of the export duty, but the miners are aware that it was imposed with the consent of their own Mining Board, and voted for by their elected Members of Council. They know the requirements of the Government, but above all they know that it requires no change in their political condition, no assistance from without, to relieve them from any burdens unanimously affirmed to be distasteful.

7. It would have been well if Victoria had earlier passed the resolutions in favour of unconditional union. It was not until the efforts to obstruct the Government of British Columbia, by shaking the confidence of the people in its justice, had proved vain that the wise course was adopted. Though, I shall presently show that the larger Colony has progressed greatly since it attained a separate existence, yet it did not escape entirely uninjured from the self-damaging attacks of the Victoria politicians. The prosperity of both Colonies depends principally on the power of the gold mines of the mainland to attract a considerable share of the large floating population which, centred in winter in California, seeks in the public prints and in every rumour, a guide to direct its steps to the most profitable field for summer labour. The Victoria papers and their Cariboo representative, during its short existence, represented British Columbia to be overtaxed and unjustly governed. Many persons, undoubtedly, in San Francisco took the English reports on English mines and management as correct, and turned their steps towards other gold fields which American speculators took care not to depreciate. The efforts of the Victoria agitators were thus partially successful. The great objects of intimidating the Government and exciting disaffection failed, but a feeling outside the Colony was created against the then recent legislation. This success, once obtained, caused alarm in Victoria. Then came the outcry that the miners were leaving the country; merchants from the Island waited on the Governor on the subject, and when the injury was done the Cariboo press was silenced.

8. Even in England, persons connected with Victoria have had a meeting where, in their eagerness for union, they have reported the two Colonies to be languishing or retrograding in their present separation. Reports on the subject, deficient either in candour or information, have been furnished to the leading London journals. I regret that the matter of union should not have been allowed to rest, where it was properly placed, in your hands. Who would emigrate from England to Colonies reported by their own reputed representatives to have early in their career entered on their decline? Who would seek investments in the funds of a community alleged to be daily diminishing in wealth?

9. I am prepared to allow that Victoria is not flourishing. I maintain that British Columbia is so. It may seem strange that their progress is not parallel, and I can believe that the cause has escaped the knowledge of some of the merchants of Victoria. The explanation is, however, simple.

10. The discoveries of gold on the Lower Fraser first attracted to British territory a large portion of the unattached population of Western America. The immigrants came