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THE BRITISH COLONIST

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OF 1864.

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CO.

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A THEATRE.

per Stmr. Oregon, APPEAR TO-NIGHT.

ree Nights Only, ve for San Francisco on the Pacific, to fall Engagement.

day, Wednesday, ALSO.

ncert, Wednesday

ERNOON,

for the accommodation of all, admitting all School children at reduced prices on that occasion only.

ago, in Lancashire, England.

d a series of 31 consecutive Academy of Music, San Francisco, and formerly leader of the principal Cities of London, and their departure for Europe, only Blaisdell Brothers!

OLOGIANS, OR

called upon to preside, and Mr. Jenkinson to act as Secretary.

Capt. Evans opened the proceedings by remarking that he fully concurred in the object for which the meeting had been called. The miners were seriously affected by the recent duties in British Columbia. They were the men who had made that colony, and it appeared that the legislature now wanted to fleece and bleed them to their utmost capacity. If the policy at present adopted was enforced it would be the sure means of driving them out of the country. (Hear, hear.) The Chairman further said that this was a meeting purely of miners and others interested in mining in British Columbia, and he invited them all to come forward and express their views, proposing to limit the speakers to fifteen minutes each.

The Secretary was then called upon to read the following series of resolutions which had been prepared for the approval and adoption of the meeting:

Whereas; Our honorable Lawmakers have lately passed an Act, increasing largely the duties on imports into our colony, and we the miners, traders and citizens of the colony who have all our interests there and a natural and earnest desire to see it progress and prosper, deem it to be our privilege as well as our duty to consider calmly, deliberately, and most respectfully this action, and to give the full and honest expression of our views on the subject.

I. Resolved: That in our judgment the amended Customs ordinance, 1865, is an act of legislation which is inopportune, unjust, impolitic, unjust and inequitable in its general provisions.

It is inopportune; 1st. Because it largely increases the cost of living in the colony at a time when the mining and trading interests of the country can least afford to bear such an increase. The past season was in every sense an unprofitable one. The miner's labour was, to a great extent, spent in preparing for future operations and his profits were consequently small. The trader shared the small profits of the miner. This has produced a general feeling of distrust and depression in the country. The increased taxation only tends to add to this feeling, and thus deter both men and capital from going into the country.

2nd. Because a gold export tax of 3 per cent has just been imposed on all treasure leaving the colony, which is in itself a heavy increase upon our former taxes. When to this is added a high tariff on all the necessities of life, it becomes a burden from which men regarding their best interests will flee when the first opportunity is offered.

It is unjust and impolitic; 1st. Because it will not increase the revenue of the colony. The great diminution in the amount of imports into the colony caused by this tariff will diminish the aggregate revenue so much that there will be a large deficit to be made up next year, when the mining population will be so small under the operation of our new taxes that it cannot be collected. No direct importations into the country can prevent this result, even if such importations should enable traders to furnish supplies at the same cost that they could have done under the old tariff.

It is inequitable; 1st. Because the increase in the absolute necessities of life far exceeds that on the luxuries, thus making the laborer in the colony bear the main, if not the whole, burden of the taxation. As an instance, the tariff on beans, one of the principal articles of consumption by the miners, is increased from 3 to 20 per cent, while that on ale and porter is only increased from 10 to 40 per cent; the tariff on flour is increased more than three-fold while that on wine is only doubled.

2d. The tariff is made to take effect at once, thus causing a sudden and quick rise in provisions in the mines just as the season begins. By this means the miner will be forced to pay famine prices in the spring, and perhaps be driven by necessity to leave the country before he has had a fair chance to go to work profitably. A reasonable notice for the enforcement of such a measure is as customary in other countries as it is equitable and fair.

II. Resolved: That in our opinion the duties on imports into the colony are unjust and inequitable; 1st. Because the increase in the absolute necessities of life far exceeds that on the luxuries, thus making the laborer in the colony bear the main, if not the whole, burden of the taxation. As an instance, the tariff on beans, one of the principal articles of consumption by the miners, is increased from 3 to 20 per cent, while that on ale and porter is only increased from 10 to 40 per cent; the tariff on flour is increased more than three-fold while that on wine is only doubled.

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III. That a copy of these resolutions be prepared for signature, and when signed by the miners and traders of British Columbia now in this city, and by none others, they be forwarded to His Excellency Governor Seymour, who is hereby most respectfully requested to lay them before the hon. Council and Legislative Assembly for their consideration, with this as our prayer, that they will cause the Customs Amendment Act to be revised to suit the circumstances of the colony.

Mr. Garfield having been called upon by the meeting to propose the first resolution said it was a question of considerable doubt in his mind whether the meeting had acted wisely in calling upon him to open a discussion on a tariff in British Columbia, as he had not given the subject that careful attention which its importance demanded. He would, however, say this, that he gave his most cordial assent to the purport of the resolution, as he considered the new customs tariff most unjust and inequitable. He regarded any measure having the effect of increasing the cost of living to the miner as injurious to the best interests of the latter and to the country generally. It served to keep the country in a second-rate condition by destroying private enterprise, robbing the miner of his hard earnings, and robbing the country of its population. The meeting was well aware that for the last two years the miners of Cariboo had had all they could do to meet their own individual expenses. The mines were remote and topographically difficult of access, the country rough, the mines deep, water plentiful, and the labor greater before reaching the auriferous deposit in Cariboo than in Colorado, Nevada, or any of the other mining districts. Numbers of hard-working miners had come back after expending all their labor in Cariboo, utterly ruined. British Columbia was now acting as a kind godmother to them by precluding them from returning (applause). He next denounced the system of levying tolls as most oppressive, and the only redeeming feature that he could see in it was that it would have the effect of driving miners away to other mining countries where they would succeed much better (loud applause). The true object in every system of political economy that he had ever studied was to impose duties on all articles of luxury and exempt, as much as possible, those which added to the cost of living. In the new customs tariff of British Columbia that policy had not been observed; the necessities of life were heavily charged, while the duties on luxuries were comparatively light. The miners would not object to an equitable system of taxation; there would be no objection to taxing liquors; if drinks were \$5, instead of four bits, he for one, would only take one, where he now took ten, and he would be much better off for it, (loud applause). He was firmly convinced that the imposition of taxes on the "beans straight," and other necessities of the miner, was most prejudicial to his interests, and the

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The resolution was put by the Chairman, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Butler Anderson came forward to propose the second resolution. He did not know that they had acted wisely in calling on him, but whether or not he had his interest in the colony, and intended to have his little say in the matter. He believed the resolution was the plain, outspoken honest truth. On general principles he was opposed to tariffs everywhere; it was a bad way of getting a revenue. He favored a direct tax. Mr. Orr had said this tariff was for encouraging direct importation, direct importation from anywhere but Victoria. It did not make a particle of difference where the goods came from. The only thing the tariff was intended for was the benefit of certain parties in the colony, he need not say where; but the effect was to raise a large revenue out of the population of Cariboo (applause). It was folly to attempt to control the laws of com-

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Major Downie next addressed the meeting. He said he, in common with his brother miners, was also deeply interested in British Columbia, and he claimed an equal right to raise his voice against the hasty, ill-advised, unjust legislation in that colony. He knew of men who had made every preparation for taking goods to Kootenay from Washington Territory, but in consequence of the new tariff they had changed their minds and were now going south of the boundary line to Idaho or Boise. He condemned in emphatic terms the duty imposed upon gold and the increased charges on the "beans straight," and other requirements of the miner, the effect of which would be to drive out men who had spent their last dollar in opening the resources of the country. He had himself been seven years in the country, and had helped to develop it; every cent he was worth had been spent in it, and he saw nothing before him now but to take up his blankets and go south of the boundary line (cheers). This was no bun-

2d. We believe there are rich deposits of gold in the wildest and most inhospitable portions of the colony. These gold fields are as yet unexplored and undiscovered. It will require men and capital combined to discover and develop them. In many instances large companies have been organized and other preparations made to send capital into the country for the purpose. This tariff discourages and cripples all such operations by an unfair increase upon all the articles and implements required for their work. Prospecting in the colony, upon which so much of our future success depends is thus checked if it is not entirely prohibited.

3d. There are hundreds of men in the colony who have spent all their means and time during the past three or four years without success. Within the small district of one and a half miles on Williams Creek six hundred thousand dollars have been spent during the past season. These men have experience in the country; they are not altogether discouraged and they purpose to go again into the mines with the hope that they will yet be able to get something in return for their lost labor and means. This tariff discourages such men, and will force them to gather up their small earnings for the season and leave the country forever.

4th. The small trader or packer who has invested his means in provisions, and is now on his way, or about to start for the colony will be compelled to seek another market. He cannot pay a double tariff and compete with those traders now in the country. He will find a better and more profitable market in the neighboring gold fields of Washington and Idaho Territories.

It is unjust and inequitable; 1st. Because the increase in the absolute necessities of life far exceeds that on the luxuries, thus making the laborer in the colony bear the main, if not the whole, burden of the taxation. As an instance, the tariff on beans, one of the principal articles of consumption by the miners, is increased from 3 to 20 per cent, while that on ale and porter is only increased from 10 to 40 per cent; the tariff on flour is increased more than three-fold while that on wine is only doubled.

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Major Downie next addressed the meeting. He said he, in common with his brother miners, was also deeply interested in British Columbia, and he claimed an equal right to raise his voice against the hasty, ill-advised, unjust legislation in that colony. He knew of men who had made every preparation for taking goods to Kootenay from Washington Territory, but in consequence of the new tariff they had changed their minds and were now going south of the boundary line to Idaho or Boise. He condemned in emphatic terms the duty imposed upon gold and the increased charges on the "beans straight," and other requirements of the miner, the effect of which would be to drive out men who had spent their last dollar in opening the resources of the country. He had himself been seven years in the country, and had helped to develop it; every cent he was worth had been spent in it, and he saw nothing before him now but to take up his blankets and go south of the boundary line (cheers). This was no bun-

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