

No. 15.

(COPY.)

Vancouver Island,
12th May, 1851.VANCOUVER
ISLAND
No. 15.

My Lord,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's Despatch No. 3, of 29th June, 1850, transmitting the Public Seal of the Colony of Vancouver Island, and Her Majesty's Warrant and Sign Manual, authorizing and directing its use.

I have also to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's Despatch No. 4, of 16th July, 1850, approving of my reasons for deferring the nomination of a Council for the present, and pointing out the expediency of establishing the Council and other prescribed institutions without any unnecessary delay.

I can assure your Lordship that I am deeply impressed with a sense of the expediency of the prescribed measures, but I regret to add that there is at present a total want of the necessary materials, either for a Council or for any other Legislative or Executive appointments. The whole tendency of the system pursued by the Hudson's Bay Company being to exclude free settlers, and reserve the Island, either as an enlarged Post of their own, or a desert.

I have received a communication from the Hudson's Bay Company, stating that no Salaries are to be paid out of the proceeds of the Land sales, but must be raised in the Island, either by taxes on imports, or otherwise. This is, in fact, repudiating the clause in their Grant, which binds them to provide at their own expense, all necessary civil and military establishments; their own arrangements tend to prevent a tax paying population settling here; and that the Harbours shall be open to all nations for the purposes of trade is prominently put forward in the Prospectus they have published.

Reports are current of Gold having been found by the Cowichem Indians, in the Ardo Canal, but they are so vague as scarcely to deserve notice.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) RICHARD BLANSHARD.

No. 16.

(COPY.)

Vancouver Island,
10th June, 1851.

My Lord,

I beg to enclose to your Lordship a copy of a Memorial presented to me by Andrew Muir, a Scotch miner, lately in the employment of the Hudson's Bay Company. The said Andrew Muir appears to have been grossly ill-treated by the Officers of that Company, and in consequence left the Island, in a Ship bound for San Francisco, in company with some other persons, who declared they did not consider their lives safe after the violent threats that had been used to them. They have returned by the first opportunity, and seek redress for the loss and damage they have sustained. Several minor cases of the same kind I have settled summarily, but a case like the present does not admit of being so disposed of, as considerable damages are claimed. I expect that other actions of a similar nature will shortly be commenced, and to secure a fair trial will, to say the least, be a matter of great difficulty, as with the exception of plaintiff's family (the Muirs), there are not five persons in the Island, except the Hudson's Bay Company's servants. My instructions authorize me to make Magisterial and temporary judicial appointments, but do not provide for the event of there being no persons qualified to hold them. I would beg to press on your Lordship's notice, the expediency of making an immediate appointment of Chief Justice or some Law Officer for the Colony, who shall have full power to hear and determine all causes, subject to the usual appeals; a fair Salary should be attached to the appointment, to be paid by the Hudson's Bay Company, till such time as it can be raised in the Island.

No. 16.

The ship Tory, has just landed about one hundred and twenty persons, all, with two exceptions, servants of the Hudson's Bay Company; some have already been sent to Oregon, and some to other posts of the Company. No preparations had been made here for their reception, beyond erecting a couple of log houses or rather sheds; in these the remainder are huddled together like cattle, as I have seen myself, to the number of thirty or thirty-five in each shed, men and women, married and