

F435
Bf.

142
New Westminster

7th October 1859

Sir

I enclose herewith for your information, the copy of a Circular which I addressed to the Gold Commissioners and Magistrates of British Columbia, on the subject of pre-empting unsurveyed Crown Lands on certain conditions, by persons who are British subjects, or who have recorded their intention of becoming such.

2. Such persons will thus be enabled to form settlements and to occupy and improve farms, in any part of the country where they may think

To The
Chief Commissioner
of Lands and Works

think it desirable to settle, as soon as they arrive in British Columbia and they will not be called upon to make any payment, till their land is surveyed, and the Government prepared to issue Titles to the same.

3. I have restricted the enjoyment of the Pre-emption right to British subjects and to persons prepared to become such, for reasons which you will readily understand, and the quantity of land which may be so pre-empted, to one hundred and sixty acres, 160 for the benefit of poor settlers who bring with them, no other capital than their own labour; and in order that such persons may be protected, and encouraged to settle in the country.

4. In the case of persons of larger

Means

5/s

means, and who may be desirous of holding a greater extent of Land for the purpose of farming or rearing stock on a large scale, I think it would be proper to exact from them a deposit of Five Shillings per acre on any Land occupied over 100 acres; - for the benefit of the Public Revenue and especially in order to secure the great object of bona fide settlement and to guard against the mere speculative occupation of Land for the purpose of resale at a high price, one of the worst evils incident to a country like this, destitute of inhabitants, and where after all, an indolent ^{is of more value,} population, ~~than~~ the unimproving Capitalist.

5. You will also observe from the Circular in question, that Town Sites

sites, with the adjacent Suburban and Rural Land, and also the sites of all Indian Villages and the Land which they have been accustomed to cultivate, to the extent of several hundred acres round each village, have been reserved and are not to be subjected to the operation of the proposed pre-emption Law.

6. The Government have at present the great object in view, of attracting to British Columbia an industrious population, for the development of its agricultural, as well as of its auriferous resources; but that object is sought to be attained by such means only, as will induce a loyal population attached to British Laws, Institutions and Rule to

to reside in the country, as it is of far
greater importance to the Empire,
that the character of the population
should be such, even though the pro-
gress of settlement should be somewhat
retarded, than that the colony
should be rapidly filled by an
alien population, expensive and
difficult to govern, and who
would probably seize the first
opportunity of discarding their
allegiance. That remark will
explain the principle of the policy
which it appears desirable to follow
in the administration of public
affairs, and I feel assured that
you will not fail to keep that
great object of public policy
continually in view.

With reference further to the
Circular

Respectfully.

I have the honor to remain

Sir,

Your most obedt servant

James C. Douglas

GR 1372, F 485E

B 1325

Col. Col.

1859-10-07