

or the small coasting craft, especially as every day I expected a steamer to start up. Nanaimo is beautifully situated on the east coast of Vancouver Island, eighty miles north of Victoria. It is noted chiefly for its coal mines, and its growth is gradual though very slow. In a paper read before the Royal Geographical Society of London in 1857, it was said, "Nanaimo altogether is a flourishing little settlement with about 125 inhabitants, of whom 37 are working men, the remainder women and children; there are about 24 children at school. * * * There is good anchorage all over the harbour. * * * About 24 houses have already been put up by the Hudson Bay Co." Coal was discovered here in 1850, and the very tardy pace at which things have moved, has been attributed to the indifferent management of the mines by the Hudson Bay Co. In 1863, the mines changed hands, and the Vancouver Coal Company, composed of English capitalists, came into possession, and affairs are gradually assuming a more prosperous and satisfactory aspect. This next year the managers confidently expect to export just double the quantity of coal they were able to do in 1863—and at less than half the cost to the purchaser at which it was first exported in 1853—viz—now at \$5 per ton to San Francisco, and \$6 for home consumption. The company at present employ in all 210 men, and pay out over twelve thousand dollars per month in salaries and wages. Miners' wages range from \$2 50 to \$5 00 according to quantity taken daily,—outside hands from \$1 75 upwards according to skill and nature of employment, with an allowance of coal per month. The Douglass pit, the only one now in operation, is producing four thousand tons per month. A great deal of money has been expended on outside works, such as bridges, work-shops, wharfs, railroad tracks (two, about half a mile each) and cottages which are rented to the workmen and others by the company. A second company has been formed, I believe in England, and have taken up a large district a few miles inland where a very fine coal seam has been discovered, and it is "expected" (a word of vast extent in these regions) that operations will commence immediately. If so, there will be a few hundreds added to the population, as six miles of railroad will be required the first thing. The present population is variously reckoned at from 600 to 800, including no less than 100 children of school age, and for the education of which very poor provision is yet made. As is the case in all the towns out here, a very small percentage of the inhabitants are church going. Farms have been taken up, and are cultivated as yet on a small scale, in the few fertile spots scattered in different directions a few miles from town. Two agricultural settlements on the coast are gradually rising into importance—Comax, say 60 north, and Cowichan 40 miles south of this. When roads are completed Nanaimo may become a profitable central position, ecclesiastically and otherwise, for both districts.

But to come to my own more immediate work. I have to premise that experience bids me say little of the present, and far less of future possibilities and probabilities. I have conducted a few services, visited a good deal, and held a public meeting this week, and the prospects are upon the whole more encouraging than I expected to find from previous correspondence with friends; when I was feeling my way a few months ago. That is to say, "encouraging" for this part of the world. At the meeting on Monday night a goodly number attended, resolved that a Presbyterian congregation be organized and supported to the best of their ability, and appointed a large committee of management. At my urgent solicitation they also resolved to pay four dollars per Sabbath, at least, out of the collection, towards our Foreign Mission Fund, to be increased as means, and incidental expenses allow. I insisted on the principle of self support being acted upon from the commencement. No one can more deeply regret than I do the almost total absence of growth as yet towards the self sustaining point in your mission to these Colonies. But the state