

crowded when this event took place, notwithstanding that the size of the claims was limited to 25 feet square. The greatest number were employed between Hope and Yale, but among the best diggings were those at Fountain, six miles above the great falls, and for some time the northern limit of mining.

Gradually the miners worked their way higher up the Fraser, past the junction of the Thompson with the Fraser at Lytton, to Cayoosh and Bridge Rivers, at Lillooet, then to the Chilkoten, and thence on past Fort Alexandria to the mouth of the Quesnel. "Late in the season of 1859 definite reports came that the search for gold had proved successful on the Quesnel; and in 1860, by the time the pioneers of the column reached Antler Creek, 600 white miners were said to be engaged on this river, making from \$10 to \$25 a day, and occasionally turning up nuggets weighing from 6 to 8 oz. each."

"TURN WE NOW TO GOLDEN CARIBOO."

In an article published nearly a score of years ago, the following sentence occurs: "Turn we now to Cariboo—Golden Cariboo—which might appropriately be termed the cradle of British Columbia, as it was the gold-rush there in 1859 that raised it from the position of a 'fur' country to the dignity of a colony and finally a province."

Extracts from Bancroft's account follow:—

"On the headwaters of Fraser River the mining operations, previously confined to the beds of the main rivers, spread in 1860, 1861, and 1862 over a large area of elevated country which was somewhat indefinitely designated as the Cariboo Region. (Douglas said, in regard to the name given to the region by the miners, properly it should be written Cariboeuf, or reindeer, the country having been so named from its being the favourite haunt of that species of the deer-kind. Cerf-boeuf—deer-ox—appears to have been the original. This was corrupted in its application to the large species of reindeer inhabiting British America.)

"The Cariboo region seemed in the autumn of 1860, when the first intimations were received of mining about the fork of the Quesnel, to be as remote and as difficult of access as the Arctic regions. Impressed with the belief that the coarser gold of the country would be found higher, a handful of miners had this year penetrated along the main and north branches of the Quesnel to the Quesnel and Cariboo Lakes. Launching their rafts, they voyaged along the winding and extended shores, prospecting the tributary streams with varied adventure and success.

"From Cariboo Lake was visible, a short distance to the westward, a group of bald mountains, subsequently known as the Snowshoe and Mount Agnes Bald Mountains. Behind these the prospectors were now penetrating. This was the core of the auriferous-slate country, whence radiated the four great rivers of the Cariboo region, the Bear, Willow, and Cottonwood Rivers, and the north branch of the Quesnel, hitherto unexplored and unnamed, but destined to become famous through their respective tributaries, Keithley, Antler, William, and Lowhee Creeks—insignificant streams issuing from the same Bald Mountain group. A year later they were the sites of the principal mining camps of the Cariboo region, known throughout the world; and the Snowshoe and Mount Agnes Bald Mountain chain, like the Sierra Nevada of California, the main range of the country, was rendered familiar to the sight of men in places where solitude and the wild animal had reigned from a primeval day.

"In August, 1859, Governor Douglas was able to report to the Colonial Secretary that 'the newly explored tract of country about Fort Alexandria and Quesnel's River' possessed 'more of the general features of a gold country than any yet known part of British Columbia.' This conclusion was simply a reflection of the opinions expressed by miners, who had reached the Quesnel Fork diggings, touching the character of the Cariboo Mountain region in its relation to the gold in the rivers; abundance of coarse gold having been found in the diggings, where it was evident it had remained in the vicinity of the gold-bearing rock.