

which ice can be supplied to the entire coast. At present the cities of British Columbia have to depend principally for their supply on what is produced by artificial means.

Though so far north considerable gardening is done at Port Essington, and an enterprising Chinaman has succeeded in raising some hardy varieties of apples. Small fruits are abundant in the gardens, and vegetables grow plentifully.

The story of Mitlakatlo has been so often told that it is unnecessary to repeat it. The abandoned appearance of the place, as the steamer calls there, brings to mind the blundering policy which led to the removal of Mr. Duncan and the Taimpsean Indians, which he had done so much to civilize, to the neighbouring territory of Alaska, where, under the Stars and Stripes, they enjoy what was denied them under the Union Jack. Though there is still a settlement at Mitlakatlo it is not what it was when Mr. Duncan was there.

The Neas river, a little further up the coast, is another important salmon stream. Port Simpson, near its mouth, looks forward to being the terminus of another transcontinental railway, though whether its dream of future greatness will be realized is a matter of doubt. It enjoys the distinction of being the rainiest place on the coast, and as it has a meteorological station—the furthest away from headquarters, by the way—the figures, though almost incredible, must be accepted as correct.

The Alaska scenery is somewhat different. Glaciers are abundant, and when at last the steamer drops anchor off the Muir glacier, whose icy sides, with the snow-capped mountains beyond, reflect the sun's rays with dazzling brilliancy, one experiences a new sensation. Scenery such as this is rare. Glaciers may be seen on the Alps, the Rockies, and other mountains, at high altitudes, but not often is to be seen a mountain of ice with its foot in the sea. This is our turning point, and from here the steamer directs its prow southwards towards civilization and friends.

While sailing through Alaskan waters the steamer touches at a number of points of interest. First in importance is Sitka, the capital, on the west side of Baranoff Island, with its fine scenery, of which Mount Edgecumbe, on Kruzoff Island, directly opposite, is a prominent feature. The deserted castle will well repay a visit. Then there is Fort Wrangel, near the mouth of the Stikkeen River, one of the largest rivers of Alaska, also famous for its salmon, and which is navigable for 150 miles from the Fort. At this village may be seen to perfection those strange totem poles characteristic of the west coast Indians. Some of them are 100 feet high and must indicate the dwelling place of some very great chief, because the higher the pole the greater the chief.

Juneau is named after a Frenchman who discovered gold in the neighbourhood. He still resides there, not so prosperous as at one time, for which whiskey is largely responsible. The village contains about 1,500 inhabitants, who live in constant jeopardy of being swept away, for behind it is a perpendicular mountain, from which a landslide might occur at any time.

Douglas Island, another calling place, has the largest gold stamp mill in the world, which is kept in operation day and night, under the glare of the electric light, reducing the rich

ores which form one of the principal products of Alaska.

At Killisnoo is a great market for herring oil, of which 400,000 gallons are made yearly. And then there are the numerous canneries, where the Chinaman and the Indian may be seen at work in myriads during the season, earning good wages for himself and bringing great gains to his employer. So profitable are these canneries that instances came under my notice in which, though they cost between one and two hundred thousand dollars, they paid for themselves in one year and left a good profit besides.

Yes, England made a sad mistake when she refused to take Alaska, with its 532,000 square miles, its population of 50,000, its gold mines, its stores of other minerals, its vast wealth of fish, its valuable sealing interests, and its trade, which in 1888, the last year to which the figures at hand refer, amounted to \$9,100,000, all of which she could have secured for \$7,200,000, the sum which our more enterprising neighbour paid for it. Nor is it the frozen region that many suppose. Against its shores, at least the more southerly, beats the warm Japan current, which ensures a mean temperature of 44.7°, and seldom allows of the formation of ice at the sea level.

If the tourist is fortunate enough to go one of those trips when the steamer diverges from her usual course to call at the Queen Charlotte Islands, which are separated from the British Columbia coast by Hecate Strait, so much the better. He will have the opportunity of seeing something of the Hydah Indians, fast becoming extinct, and whose place may be occupied in the near future by the hardy Crofters, whom it is proposed to settle on portions of Vancouver and the Queen Charlotte Islands. The Hydahs are an interesting people. They are more skilful than most of the aborigines, their carving in wood and stone, and their silverwork being of a high order of excellence.

The two weeks spent in a trip up the northern portion of the west coast of North America is not wasted. The trip across the continent is not complete without this appendix. The lover of nature, the invalid in search of health, the sportsman who loves to hunt big game, the ethnologist giving his study to races fast becoming extinct, and the politician or the political economist who wishes to see for himself the extent and resources of this great country, will all be amply repaid. And a kodak will be found a good travelling companion.

J. JONES BELL.

#### RONDEAU.

Here underneath the glowing sun,  
A landscape fair before mine eyes,  
Above me the blue smiling skies,  
I counted friends full many a one.  
With ghostly tread time hath but run  
A few short months; the old year dies!  
Here underneath the glowing sun,  
A landscape fair before mine eyes.

Within my soul, of fancy spun,  
A new ideal doth arise:  
Seek thou the highest! Duty cries.  
Old ties are broken, vows undone,  
Here underneath the glowing sun.

MARY MORGAN (GOWAN LEE).  
Montreal, December, 1892.

Truth is as impossible to be soiled by any outward touch as the sunbeam.—Milton.

Sometimes we may learn more from a man's errors than from his virtues.—Longfellow.

#### WORDS.

There is no study more interesting than that of the origin of language; whence came and how originated this wondrous power of articulate speech? For man alone is the speaking animal. He has been called the laughing animal, the fire-using animal. It has been said, again, that his chief distinction from the lower animals is that he alone has grasped the power and potency that lies in the thumb. But more than aught else, he is the speaking animal. It is true others have means of communication of various degrees of excellence, but man alone has articulate speech. No scientist has gone so far as to claim a grammar for even the most highly developed lower animals; for the apes, for example, which most nearly resemble man in form, or for the ants, which, Sir John Lubbock tells us, most nearly resemble him in intellect. Man, therefore, is the only animal whose language is progressive in any true sense. The tame dog barks somewhat differently from the way in which the wild dog barks; the tame canary sings somewhat differently from the way in which the wild canary sings. But in all its essentials the language of the lower animals is non-progressive. The language of man alone is capable of development; he alone has written speech and literature.

There are various theories as to the origin of human speech. First: That of the Bible, which represents our first parents as perfect, in language as in everything else—which represents, for example, the animals as being brought before Adam to be named by him; "and whatsoever Adam called every animal, that was the name thereof. What this first language was, according to this theory, we do not know. The pious Jews believed it to have been Hebrew; the Highlanders of Scotland are said to believe it to have been Gaelic. According to this first explanation, that language sprang into being full-grown, as did Minerva from the head of Jove, there was but one language for all the world until the tower of Babel did its fateful work, "and the Lord confounded the tongues of men." Speech, then, is directly a divine gift. It is the last seal of divinity stamped by God upon His intelligent offspring, and proves more conclusively than does his upright form or than "his countenance commercing with the skies," that he is made in the image of God. Secondly: That man is endowed with a linguistic, as he is with an artistic, and many another faculty, and that, under proper conditions, this linguistic faculty becomes ever more highly developed. That is as with other things, so here. Præval man had this germ, as it were, within him, and cultivation has evolved therefrom the myriad forms of speech found in the world to-day. This theory is, I believe, the one now generally accepted, supported, as it is, by analogies in so many fields of Nature and of Art.

Hardly less interesting than this question are the many others resting upon or connected with it; the origin of man—whether he was created in one spot or in several spots, and whether perfect or not; and how arose the diversities of language; and how there came to be such a thing as a grammar—whether the primitive words were mere interjections, exclamations of joy, fear, and so on, and many another. An attempt to answer these would take us too far afield; but, at any rate, one thing is plain: the study of language is of