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## THE KNICKERBOCKER.

VOL. LII.

OCTOBER, 1858.

No. 4.

### FRASER RIVER.

CALIFORNIA and Australia owe their existence as populous States to the gold in their rivers and rocks. British Columbia owes to the same cause the sudden growth of its population from a few hundreds to many thousands. Events like these, which have occurred within a boy's remembrance, are nothing new in the history of the world. Cupidity, the lust for gold, the desire for great wealth with little labor, have both peopled and discovered States. Not to pass beyond the history of our own continent, the bravery and daring of the old Spanish adventurers were inspired by the same desire. With the visions of abundance which Ponce de Leon saw, as the groves of Florida rose before him in the west, on that Easter Sunday, Tradition and Poetry have mingled some visions of resurrection, and pictured the aged Spaniard searching after a secret fountain of youth, in which to bathe and draw the forces of a fresh life. But it was 'the wealth of Ind,' conquest, and treasure which drew the long line of adventurers who succeeded him — Vasquez de Ayllon, Gomez, Pamphilo de Narvaez, De Soto, descending upon the Atlantic coast, and De Cabrillo and his pilot, Ferrelo, coasting the Pacific shore. Even with the purer purposes of the Plymouth, Maryland, and Virginian colonists were mingled some baser instincts. But in the grand result, all these moving impulses, of however base an origin, whether in the Spaniard, the Frenchman, or the Englishman, have been overruled in a more beneficent disposition of events; and out of the perplexing and difficult problem of mingled good and evil arose, in due time, the clear solution — a new world.

A course of events, in some sort like these, though on a smaller scale, has been the history of Australia and California. It requires nothing of prophetic ken, and little of sagacity, to foretell the same result in British Columbia; and if the discoveries of gold in the Fraser River region are judged to be the beginning of a series

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