

wan and Lake Winnipeg basins, equally suited for agriculture, and rich in most of the elements of wealth. The passes of the Rocky Mountains have been examined, and these expeditions have resulted in the discovery that there exists no practical difficulty in the construction of a road, and even a railway, from the shores of Lake Superior to the Fraser River; and as British vessels can now proceed for 2000 miles into the American continent by the St. Lawrence and the canal and lake navigation of Canada, a road for the remainder of the distance to British Columbia ought, considering its importance, to present as few difficulties in a financial as it does in an engineering point of view.

In the colony itself the want of communication is severely felt. The force despatched to aid the first colonists in road-making has proved wholly inadequate, and there are no funds, in the present undeveloped state of the colony, available even for the most necessary public works. Possessing as yet little or no export trade, and the gold of the miners passing over the boundary into the United States territory to evade the duty on its export, the public resources of the country are restricted to such duties as can be levied on imports; and these, in a somewhat unsettled state of society, are not always easily collected. Capital for making the first roads in a new colony, might, we think, be judiciously advanced by the Imperial Government. A country would thus at once be endowed with the elements of success; immigration would set in, and a rapidly increasing population would soon enable the local government to pay off the debt thus incurred, and the commerce of Great Britain could not but feel in a short time the effect of so provident an outlay. Such is the course adopted by the Government of the United States in its new settlements. Roads are the first necessities of civilisation; without them there can be neither trade, social progress, nor political development.

At present the population of British Columbia is almost wholly fed and clothed from the neighbouring states of Oregon and California. The exports of the colony are insignificant, and consist only of a few tons of oil, a little coal, and some barrels of cranberries. Some spars that were ordered from England had to be purchased from a neighbouring State, although the forests of British Columbia abound with the finest timber in the world. There were then in the colony no means of transporting them to the coast. Hay, which sells at prices ranging from L.8 to L.16 per ton, is imported from California, as are building materials from Puget Sound and Oregon. 'In our present state,' writes an

intelligent settler, 'we are compelled to sit on an American chair, wear an American hat, read an American book, and patronise an American tailor; in fact America reigns supreme, and this must be the case while we are driven of necessity to American markets to obtain our supplies. Almost all the articles that we require now fetch here three times their cost in England, and are, moreover, of an inferior description. A ready and remunerative market is a great boon to the shipper; but we have more to offer,—we have good harbours and a free port. Not one iota of duty has to be paid on the goods shipped to Victoria; there they can remain till they are sold; and when sold, first class paper on England in payment is at the disposal of the merchant.' These facts cannot be generally known in England. The imports into British Columbia and Vancouver Island amount to L.700,000 yearly, but the gold of British Columbia, in consequence of the absence of trade with the mother country, instead of finding its way to England, goes to swell the exports of the precious metal from California.

In one important respect British Columbia presents greater attractions than many of our other dependencies. No part of the world is better suited to the constitution of Englishmen. The capital, New Westminster, possesses a climate milder than that of England, although in a latitude a thousand miles further north than Quebec. Snow falls in the mountains early in October, but seldom remains for any length of time in the valleys. The summer is dry, and the heat considerable. One peculiarity of the climate it requires, Mr. Pemberton says, an effort to realize. 'Surrounded by snowy peaks, the air is often not only warm, but sultry. Even at Victoria, where snow seldom exceeds a few inches in depth, or at Langley, we have evidence of this every day. The snow itself is not of the damp compact nature we are accustomed to; it is light, dry, and drifting, and on this account, when it thaws it disappears with astonishing rapidity.' The Rocky Mountains have been crossed without difficulty on the 21st of January.

This colony is unsurpassed in pictorial interest. It is a land of broad lakes, foaming rivers, thundering torrents, of mountains piercing with their snowy pinnacles the blue transparent sky, with valleys of enchanting beauty, and forests of matchless magnificence. 'Nothing,' says Governor Douglas, 'can surpass the imposing grandeur of the mountain masses and deafening cataracts of the two districts, the Harrison's River and Lake, the admiration of every lover of the sublime and picturesque in scenery.' In other districts