

ifornia did, sustain the population of to-day, and half-a-million more if they were to come to-morrow at any given point without calling into requisition the whole of her resources. Now, what do I find in this respect? This great truth—that British Columbia is as capable in agriculture as she is in mining, even within the contracted limits to which I shall confine myself, extensive as those limits are in point of distance, but nothing, worse than nothing, in comparison with the total extent of her vast agricultural area.

From Lillooet on the west to Soda Creek on the east side of the Fraser, say 200 miles north, thence to Cache Creek, along the Thompson, to Savana's Ferry, up the lakes to Kamloops and Seymour, say 200 miles south, I find a country as fertile, as easy of cultivation and as durable as most of the better portions of California, and which, judging from its general features and the actual crops it produced last year is certainly capable, without exaggeration, of sustaining at least half-a-million people in the two great necessities of life, flour and meat. Throughout these limits I also find, as in California, that all required to make an apparently barren land highly productive is sufficient irrigation, for the crops last year by this means averaged thirty bushels to the acre, an average over that of any similar given area to be found, I believe, on the coast. It is estimated by parties engaged in buying last year's grain, that the Upper Fraser, from Lytton to Quesnelmonth, produced 1000 tons of wheat, which is equivalent to 9,000 barrels of flour, while the quality of flour is equal to the celebrated Golden Gate brand of California; and that this is not an exaggerated calculation, is evident, from the fact of Cariboo this winter, the most severe ever known, being abundantly supplied with flour of your own producing at 20 cents a pound instead of 50 cents a pound, when the supplies were dependent upon California. Thus you have arrived at that period, long to be remembered in your history when the upper country, even the "howling wilderness" as it is called, has become self-sustaining in flour. Few people, especially those unacquainted with mining countries, can form a true estimate of the importance of this achievement. While California remained dependent on Chili for flour, she made little progress in the development of her material interests; while British Columbia remains dependent upon California we see the same thing; but as the former gradually became self-sustaining, she gradually became what she is, the princely mistress of the Pacific. Shall we deny the same results to the latter? Perhaps we might with propriety if she were not a large producer of gold and coal; but having these, with the production of her own flour, her career, in my opinion, cannot be impeded. No, sir, the acts of your taking last year the first step towards your independence of the world for the chief means of living, the first time observe it has been taken in your history, is worth more, a thousand times more, than all the glittering, unstable, grandeur of the past, be-