

ways found at the Company's posts," he winds up his narrative with a short table of distances:—"Stuart's Lake is 50 miles long; Babine Lake 100 miles long to Nass Glee, course about S. E. and N. W.; from Nass Glee to Fort Simpson, 250 miles." From Fort St. James the Major ran down a feeder of Frazer's river, called Stuart's river, some 50 miles to Fort George. Here he took the main stream of Frazer's river, down to Fort Alexander, on the southern confines of New Caledonia, where he found a community of miners in constant and regular communication with the lower country, and whence he had no difficulty in getting to Victoria by the ordinary route of travel.

NEW ROUTE TO THE MINES.

Imperfect as the poor Major's exploration has been, it establishes the fact that gold exists from the coast to near the northern and eastern boundary of the colony, well high to the Rocky Mountains, in portions of the country never before "prospected;" but far more important is the fact which he asserts, that easy means of transport of merchandize exist by the route he travelled, which will be much shorter from Port Essington to New Caledonia than the present route by Frazer's river; while the difficulties are far less, and the carriage will be much cheaper, even adding the freight coastwise from Victoria to Port Essington.

I confess I feel rather astonished, if the Major is correct, that these indefatigable "pathfinders," the Hudson's Bay Company's officers, did not discover this northern and easier route, for they took great pains to find a better one than the old route by Frazer's river, &c., which is so bad that frequently 50 and 60 horses perish from fatigue and hunger on the journey. It is true that till lately the Fort Simpson Indians were very fierce and intractable, and it might have been imprudent to transport much property through their neighborhood.

PRODUCTIVENESS OF THE MINES.

It is impossible to give an estimate of the production of gold in British Columbia. All

accounts agree that the individual earnings of the miners are much larger than in California or Australia. It is very common to light upon a man going to San Francisco with several thousand dollars, upon others with one thousand each, and upon many with some hundreds; but besides these exceptional cases which come to light it is all guess work.

The amount "manifested" as exported in the last three months was \$451,866, which is a good amount for so small a number of miners as have been at work within that period; but I should think an amount equal to the sum just stated must have been taken by private hands. Assuming for example, that 1,000 miners have left the mines with \$500 a piece, a low estimate, this would make \$500,000 taken away in the last quarter, besides the \$451,866 manifested. I doubt, besides, that the amounts shipped on freight are all given.

The export of gold is not the only test of the productiveness of the mines. To the success of the mining interest I attribute the growing prosperity of Victoria—the building of houses, stores, and shops by the merchants, traders and shopkeepers, and by other inhabitants. To the same cause I attribute the demand for improvements in real property which has lately taken place. Much of the gold produced remains here and goes to pay for local improvements. When I see men who came to Victoria eighteen months ago poor, growing rich, ceasing to borrow money, and building houses and shops, I can have no doubt as to the source of their improved means. Another most important "sign of the times," and a most gratifying one, is the growth of confidence in the permanent progress of the place and in the future productiveness of the mines. When cautious and prudent men, after long observation and due reflection, begin to make permanent investments in real property, there need be no fears entertained of the future. My own conviction is that the day of the retrogression of both colonies is past. Their progress may be slow, or it may be rapid, but progress they must.