

istinus which forms the north-eastern extremity of the island. Captain Torrens has kindly furnished me with notes from his journal and from them I will extract a succinct account of his wanderings. From Point Rose the party coasted southward, "prospecting" as they went. The "color," as the miner calls a successful trial for gold, was found always everywhere on the coast in the concrete, and in the different strata of gravel in the cliffs; but the best "prospects" were derived from the black sand on the beach from Point Rose to Skidegate, a distance of some sixty odd miles on the south coast. Capt. Torrens thinks the discovery of gold in black sand (iron pyrites) on the sea coast a remarkable fact. Gold in considerable quantities is found similarly situated on the north coast of California, at a place called Gold Bluff, where miners have been at work extracting it from the "black sand," by machinery and the use of quicksilver, for the last nine years. At Skidegate village the Indians behaved in so hostile a manner that the party went back in their canoes to Fort Simpson. Smitten by qualms of conscience at their inhospitality, or more probably, having a dread of Governor Douglass' vengeance, as he had sent a message beseeching kind treatment for the party, the Indians, to make amends, sent a deputation to Fort Simpson to invite Captain Torrens to repeat his visit under a promise of safe conduct from the chiefs of the "Haidhas," the most powerful tribe on the island. Thus encouraged the Captain and his men started again. *En route* they visited Pitt Island which lies on the east side of Queen Charlotte's Island, between it and the mainland.—Here they found specimens of gold-bearing quartz. They then made for Gold Harbor, on the east side of Queen Charlotte's Island, where a considerable quantity of gold was blasted in 1852, under the auspices of the Hudson's Bay Company, and sent to London—a fact which added to the exhibition of golden nuggets by Indians frequenting Victoria, had raised high hopes among the more speculative of our townsmen that great wealth lay here.

Captain Torrens was disappointed if he entertained any such hopes. He found the gold "leads" worked out. At least, he and his party thought, and they left again for the mainland. On their way back they visited an island 25 miles to the north of the Queen Charlotte group, which they found to be very rich in copper ore. They visited also Kagahni and Tongass islands, a little beyond the parallel of the British Possessions, and Chatsina, on the main Russian Territory. These localities they found to contain lead, bismuth, plumbago, and quartz rich in sulphurets, which analyze from \$135 to \$200 per ton, in great abundance.

Captain Torrens describes the character of the north-west coast of British Columbia as "highly mountainous, one long continued formation of slate interpersed with frequent veins of chrysalized quartz."

#### THE MAINLAND.

The Captain having determined to examine the interior of the mainland of British Columbia in this northern portion of it he ascended the Naas river, which empties into the Pacific about forty miles north of Fort Simpson. Nothing remarkable struck his notice until he and his men had got up the river for forty miles. Here they observed evidence of volcanic action at some remote period in the discolored and blistered appearance of the rocks; and here they commenced "prospecting," which they continued for a distance of 100 miles, being the extreme distance they proceeded to, and throughout which they found the bars in the river to be auriferous. The trip being essentially a "prospecting trip," they did not settle down the general operations of a mining camp, remaining only a day here and a day there, as circumstances permitted. The river being full, the 'bars' were but little exposed.—Good diggings, were however, discovered, and the whole party were sanguine

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