

development of the mineral and other resources of these hitherto unknown regions, are all put forward; and, indeed, the appearance of Sir Edmund Head as Chairman of the New Company affords no small guarantee that they are put forward with an honest intention of realising them. Whatever strictures may fairly have been addressed to the jealous and exclusive policy of the Company as it existed before the recent change, they are not, we trust, applicable to the new administration—who announce their intention of acting on a different system. Moreover it has very recently been stated by Mr. Fortescue in the House of Commons, that negotiations are opened for the transfer or surrender to the Crown of the territorial rights of the Company over the regions lying between Lake Superior and the Colony of British Columbia. It is probable that ere long the direct authority of the British Government will be exercised over districts to which the influx of gold-diggers and emigrants is now giving a new character and increased importance.

We shall now proceed briefly to survey these several districts of British North America, which are subjected in some measure to the changing and eventful influences of the times: and we begin with Vancouver Island. This 'England of the Pacific'—as this island, from its somewhat analogous position, has been called—presents an aspect by no means inviting (and certainly not maintaining the analogy), as it is approached from the sea. Instead of the white cliffs of Albion, dark, gloomy rocks rise perpendicularly out of the tide, and scowl over waters generally sparkling under a warm sun and blue skies. Behind this natural sea-wall, rise immediately a succession of round-topped hills, retiring inland, and clothed with the ever monotonous fir-tree of the coast, adhering to a poor and very scanty soil. The scene is backed by a still higher range of absolutely bare rocky mountain, running, like a backbone, through the entire centre of the island, and culminating in a jagged uneven *sierra* of pointed tops. Examined more minutely, however, Vancouver Island is not without its portions of more level, well-clothed, quiet English scenery, even occasionally opening into broad undulating downs. Much, indeed, of the bare, unfertile character of the central highlands (where the mountain loch, and the burn brawling by its fern-clad banks, not infrequently remind the traveller of scenery more near the Tweed) is often continued down to the coast, and we fear that a great part—perhaps even the greater part—of the island is wholly irreclaimable. But where alluvial deposits have accumulated—as on the banks of streams, valleys, and the more open tracts—pastoral and agricultural country, of