

A terrible day's travelling we had through swamps and quagmires, over fallen trees, ledges of rocks, bog-holes, of such a nature, that every step you took you didn't know but it would be your last; you might sink to rise no more. We crossed several gulphs filled with snow, from fifteen to twenty feet deep, and the road was literally covered with dead animals. Thus we struggled on, and finally reached Antlers Creek, tired and weary, about four o'clock in the afternoon of the 4th of July, and to a certainty, we found it a rough looking place, log huts, canvass tents, all over the place, ditches, pits, mounds of earth, flumes, trenches, and sluice boxes, pumps, &c., in fact, you hardly knew where to go. After wandering about awhile, we struck a place and pitched our tent, kindled a fire, had something to eat, and after awhile laid our weary bodies down to rest, but there was very little sleep for us that night; being the 4th of July, the Yankees were celebrating the gaining of their independence by burning the trees in the forest, discharging guns and revolvers, and making many other disagreeable noises the whole night long.

Next morning we started off up Antlers Creek to seek the golden dust, and in going along we passed hundreds of places that had been prospected and abandoned. No treasure there to be found, we at length came to a place, which we considered likely, and commenced operation: at once, worked hard all day, returned to the camp in the evening like many hundreds that day, without seeing colour in the wash-pan. Next day we returned to the same place; we did, however, find colour to-day, but that was all. We worked here some time, but were obliged to leave in consequence of water rising upon us.

Two other Englishmen, just below us, had been working for several days, but, "had found nothing;" one of them gave up the job, packed up his kits, and started back; the other one, an old experienced digger, who had been out to the Australian mines, joined us, and we went the whole hog day after day, and many were the holes we dug; in some of them we found gold, but not in quantities to pay, in fact, I never heard of any parties striking it in this creek this season, sufficient to pay expenses. There were several companies at work, two or three claims were paying, one especially, paying well, which I saw for myself; two or three times after they had cleaned up their sluice boxes in the evening, for their day's work, from

eight hundred to a thousand dollars of gold in the pan, but even this company had been at an enormous expense, before getting their mine into operation, they were considerably in debt, and the danger was, before they got cleared up, the vein would work out, as was frequently the case.

There had been a great deal said about the richness of this creek, and the quantity of gold taken out from time to time; but not a word was said on the other side of the question, (one tale is good till another is heard) there had been several companies ruined at this creek. One company, a party of eight Cornishmen, I was well acquainted with, were on ground adjoining this rich claim, we passed and repassed the place for many days; they took up eight claims, one hundred square feet to a claim, they had worked for months, had diverted the river, put in flumes, prepared their sluice boxes, got their pumps and all other necessary apparatus ready for work, and yet they never struck it in sufficient quantities to pay for working, and the day before we left Antlers Creek, they abandoned the place, and left it, ruined men. This was the case with every other creek; some struck it rich, and this was blazed in every paper; the many lost all they had, and were completely beggared; this was never named but hushed down.

My opinion of the affair is, that there is gold, but not in every creek and cañon, nor is it laid just below the surface; it is laid in spots, and deep in the ground. The shallowest diggings I saw or heard of were ten feet deep; but in most places gold was found at a depth of from twenty to thirty feet, and in some places much deeper even than this; and for the dry diggings mentioned by Frazer, they were not found when I left Cariboo. Water was the greatest enemy we had to contend within most places we prospected, we were driven out with water, we could not reach the bed-rock, even with pumps, we were defeated, and the water was fearfully cold. The general cry was, "We can't get down for water."

We worked on till the 19th of July, but never made a cent; the cost of living was awfully high, provisions cost me for three of us, nine dollars per day (thirty-six shillings.) Flour, four shillings per pound, sometimes five shillings, many times for days together there was none to be had; Bacon from four to five shillings per pound; Beans, four shillings; Sugar, four shillings; Tea and Coffee, twelve shillings; Beef, two shillings,