

130 miles." Referring to this tract, which he thoroughly examined, Mr. Richardson adds "it possesses generally a good soil, and may hereafter be thickly settled. It is mostly covered with forest, but in some parts presents a prairie or parklike aspect with grass-covered ground, studded with single trees or clumps of them, and offers great encouragement to agricultural industry.

Like the Fraser valley west of the Cascade mountains, the valuable agricultural country just described will need clearing, and its timber will be saleable; but unlike many of the best parts of the Fraser it will nowhere require the very costly process of dyking, etc., nor like the arable lands of the settled upper country—(New Westminster and Yale districts)—will it want the not inexpensive work of irrigation.

Better than all, our East Coast farmers will in the coal towns, and in the iron-smelting and manufacturing towns, and villages of the future, have a home market for all they can produce, not omitting sawlogs and firewood, and, when their fully developed ability fails to meet the ever-increasing demand, it will, by railway, be supplied from the Columbian and Saskatchewan Mainland, so that eventually a great interchange of products will ensue; thus affording local business to the railway in addition to what, in no inconsiderable degree, would, from the first, arise between Esquimalt and the coal mines and agricultural districts north of it.

The foregoing is quite relevant to the population question; now for the facts and figures thereanent promised in a preceding paragraph:

First, however, let it be premised that others besides the Mainland M. P. need to be set right in this matter. How it comes, perhaps Mr. Dewdney can tell; the strange relief has recently found utterance in Ottawa and Toronto, that of the sparse population of this Province as a whole the greater part is to be found in Mr. Dewdney's pet districts already named. A leader in the "Weekly Globe" of 27th April last has the following—"What there is of population in British Columbia is located chiefly along the Fraser and Thompson Valleys," and the usually accurate and cautious Premier Mr. Mackenzie in the Commons at Ottawa, 20th April last, speaking on the Pacific Railway, said—"There is no doubt the bulk of the population of British Columbia is settled in the Fraser Valley."

The facts are decidedly against this statement, as will now be proved in more ways than one.

The electoral districts of New Westminster and Yale are vast in extent, including the greater part of the as yet settled Fraser Valley, and all of the Thompson Valleys north and south fit for arable farming, besides to the south, the settlements of Okanagan, Nicola Valley and Similkameen, and on the coast the Burrard Inlet sawmills and logging camps. These districts in 1858 and succeeding years offered the greatest attraction to immigrants of any part of the Province, as

on the Fraser bars, and the Thompson and Similkameen mines, gold in paying quantities was found. These localities have always (unlike the east coast of Vancouver for the four last exciting years) been open for settlement without let or hindrance; yet, for all this, the B. C. voter's list of 1876 shows for these two Mainland districts 851 voters, and for the compact districts of Victoria District and Victoria City 1057 voters, or a difference of 25 per cent. in favor of the Island. Adding to the two Mainland districts 118 voters for New Westminster city electoral district, we have a total of 969; and adding to the total of the two Island districts, named as a foreshadowing of what Vancouver's east coast will yet be, 338 voters for Nanaimo district we have a total of 1395, or about 50 per cent. excess for the Island. The 445 voters for Cariboo and the voters of Lillooet and Kootenay help up the Mainland count; yet notwithstanding the disabilities pointed out the whole Island exceeds the Mainland by about 9 per cent. For lack of a census of population the voters' list has to be referred to. The Provincial census of school population for 1876 throws other light on the question at issue. It indirectly points to the comparative number of married couples and families on the Island and Mainland, thus to a certain extent indicating how far each population may be counted on as fixed. On the Island the census gives 1790 as the number of children of school age of whom a few are from the Mainland attending the higher public and private schools of Victoria. The whole Mainland has 700 as its school population.

The imposition and collection of assessed and school taxes for the year 1876-77 affords yet another way of viewing the matter in dispute. The revenue from the Island under this head comes to..... \$31,364 and from the Mainland to..... 19,269 Showing in favor of the Island an excess of..... \$12,095

I have been careful as to the accuracy of the facts and figures herein presented, and upon them rest the case for the Island as against the statistics above quoted from Mr. Dewdney's speech, and the erroneous assertion copied from the Toronto "Globe," that the bulk of Columbia's population is along the Fraser and Thompson valleys.

In a further communication I will deal with more serious matters, on which I am compelled to differ with Mr. Dewdney and some other Mainlanders.

No. 2.

[July 16th, 1877.]

EDITOR COLONIST:—Under the above heading in a letter of 30th June last in your paper, facts and figures were adduced by me to prove the preponderance of population in this Province to be on the Southeast and East coast of Vancouver Island and not in the valleys of the Fraser and Thompson, as had mistakenly been affirmed in the House of Commons, Ottawa, and within the columns of the Toronto *Globe*.