

bank dry; sometimes wearing away its left bank, and so leaving a corresponding part of its right bank dry. These parts thus left dry soon become covered with herbage, and possibly even with shrubs and trees, and we should call them "*benches*" in British Columbia. And in the course of such a river as the Fraser these "*benches*" often extend over many acres. For the Fraser is an immense river, considerably larger than the river Mersey, in Liverpool. It was found that in these banks or benches there was a deposit of gold which was obtained in this way, you would fill a pan about 18 inches in diameter with the soil from these benches, and then pouring water into the pan you wash away the coarser parts of the soil, and as gold is heavier than the soil it sinks to the bottom, and having thus washed it several times you eventually obtain tiny flakes of gold, small grains the size of a mustard seed, or of a grain of wheat. Doing that day by day, or hour by hour throughout the day, you are eventually able to gather in at the end of the day as much as £2 or £8, or even £10 worth of gold, if you happen to fall upon a rich deposit. The banks of the Fraser have been thus completely washed, and as you pass up and down it you will see where the earlier gold seekers have washed all the soil and left great boulders and stones. But is there, it may be asked, much gold obtained from these? There have been men who have obtained as much gold as ought to satisfy any reasonable man; but I suppose no man ever yet obtained as much as satisfied him. The gold seekers very soon came to the conclusion that if the benches of the lower Fraser thus contained gold all they had to do was to go up and up the river till they reached the source from whence the gold was brought; and so they have now reached the great gold fields of Cariboo, where gold is no longer obtained by the simple process of *washing*, but must be reached by the more costly and laborious process of *mining* in the strict sense of the term—sinking shafts and running tunnels, &c. Now, let me caution you from forming an idea that that would be a place to go to. When I tell you this—that every sovereign's worth of gold costs 30s. to get—there is nothing very tempting in that. You may ask why do persons go at all if it costs so much to get gold. Simply because each man hopes to be the person who will get the prize. This calculation can be arrived at—that, out of a thousand gold miners, three or four or five get as much gold as they care for; perhaps the balance of the hundred will make good wages, from £2 to £6, £7, or £8 a-day; but the remaining 900 will be utterly ruined. I could give you many illustrations of ruin coming upon the gold miner. I could tell you