

ing over the vessel's stern. These steamers have the greatest difficulty in forcing their way up the rapids, and sometimes fail altogether to stem them. It is not at all uncommon for the current to catch the vessel's bow and spin her round, so that she flies down the stream at headlong speed, until she is brought up against a snag, or run into the bank, while steam is got up for a fresh effort. Sometimes, after repeated failures, crew and passengers land, and tow her past some obstacle that has baffled the power of steam to master.

The banks of the river at these parts are highly arduous, but are almost deserted now for the richer diggings up the country. At Fort Hope, one hundred miles distant from the Fraser's mouth, the steamer ceases to navigate, although canoes can reach Fort Yale, sixteen miles higher. At this point the river races through the mountains that hem it in so closely, that it becomes comparatively a thread of water forcing its way between and over the rocks that impede its course, with headlong speed; and the trail for those who ascend it lies now over the boulders by the river side, now high above by a dizzy, insecure path round the face of the mountains.

To move round to the Cariboo diggings, the way lies by what is known familiarly in the colony as the Harrison-Lillooet route. Of this way I may have more to say hereafter, and need only mention now that it leaves the Fraser some sixty miles from its mouth, meeting it again more than a hundred miles above, thus avoiding the difficulties of the rocky pass I have just described. Travelling by this route (a chain of small lakes, connected by fair roads) is perfectly easy, although, of course, expensive and rough. Yet welcome inns will be found at intervals along it. The emigrant, however, will do well to take his own provisions in the pack which he carries, and which, if he be wise, will contain all the impedimenta he will travel with in British Columbia.

The shores of this country are, as I have said, not inviting. Rocky, and clothed with dense, in some places almost impenetrable timber, they offer few, if any, inducements to the settler. Inland, however, there is a much clearer and fertile country. The natural resources of British Columbia are many and rich indeed. To say nothing of its immense mineral wealth, its inlets abound in salmon of extraordinary size, and many other varieties of fish; native hemp, equal to Russian, is found growing wild on the banks of the Fraser and other rivers, and the timber is magnificent and inexhaustible. There is plenty of wild fowl on the shores; but inland animal life is scarce—a few deer, a chance bear or so, and some foxes being the only attractions to the sportsman. The Indians cultivate the potato largely, which does not seem to be indigenous to the country, but was, no doubt, introduced by the earliest settlers, or visitors there, and gather from the mountain sides quantities of cannass, a root resembling the onion, berries and moss, which, with salmon and shell fish, they prepare and store for their winter food. They are found generally very friendly to the white man, and show no disposition to molest him, or interfere with his settling in their neighbourhood.

From a correspondent we have received the following plan for Rupert's Land, as the best high-road to British Columbia:—

West of Lake Superior, a line commencing at the 48th parallel of latitude, rising at the west end of the Lake of the Woods to the 49th, and running to the Rocky Mountains, forms the boundary between the United States and British Central America, or Rupert's Land. A very small portion of this vast territory belongs to Canada; over the rest, extending for about 1200 miles

from east to west, and 700 or 800 from north to south, watered by rivers which, after courses of many hundred miles, find their outlet chiefly in Hudson's Bay, the Hudson's Bay Fur-trading Company, by virtue of a charter granted in 1670 by Charles II, claims to be Lord-paramount, and to have the exclusive right of trading, and of selling or leasing land. The legality of this charter is contested. This territory is inhabited by about 40,000 Red Indians, 6000 half-castes, descendants of white fathers, and by about 3000 white men, the greater number of the last two residing in a district stretching for thirty miles along the banks of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, known as the Red River or Selkirk settlements, and which are some 600 miles south of Hudson's Bay.

The Company has about seventy trading posts in Rupert's Land. At the principal, Fort Garry on the Red River, a governor resides, ruling a district of fifty miles on either side, called Assiniboia. The vast remainder is utterly without law.

Great ignorance has prevailed respecting Rupert's Land. It was supposed to be useless, except as producing the fur-bearing animals, and that the Rocky Mountains were almost impassable. The Canadian Government, however, in 1857-58, sent out two exploring expeditions under Professor Hind, and at the same time the British Government despatched Captain Palliser, Dr. Hector, and others, who remained till 1860.

They explored the whole of the territory, and report that certain passes of the Rocky Mountains are practicable at all seasons; that one exists through which a wagon-road can be formed with slight labour, and that through another a railway may be formed; that a fertile belt of land, from 50 to 100 miles wide, extends for 900 miles, from near the Lake of the Woods to the base of the Rocky Mountains, having a thickly-wooded country, full of lakes and streams abounding in fish, to the north, and a broad arid expanse to the south, reaching many hundred miles into the United States.

This fertile belt is amply watered, and is almost encircled by rivers and lakes in great part navigable, by which timber can be brought to it either from the east or west. An ample supply is to be found in the belt itself, on ranges of mountains, on the banks of the rivers and streams, and in separate forests.

A uniformity of climate, soil, and productions, exists over the fertile belt, though improving towards the west, even in a higher latitude, and at a greater elevation. The soil consists of clay, loam, and marl, in various proportions, with but little sand, and overlaid with a rich vegetable mould of from two to five feet thick. The climate is healthy, and perfectly suited to British constitutions. The winter lasts five months, spring one, autumn one, and summer five. Although the winter is very cold, the heat of summer is great, and rapidly brings all cereals and most fruits to perfection.

It is an admirable grazing country, and there is a large amount of winter pasturage. Cattle and horses remain out all the winter. In some districts it is necessary to cut hay, which the natural grasses supply in profusion. Sheep thrive and multiply. Pigs, where there are oak woods, if turned out, require no looking after. Agricultural operations have been carried on for many years at the Red River, and round the trading posts and mission stations, with great success. Wheat is the staple produce. The ordinary yield is thirty bushels to the acre, and oftentimes forty bushels. It is cut three months from the date of sowing. Indian corn is very fine, and never fails on the dry lands. Root crops, especially potatoes, turnips, and beet, yield very