

all arrived so utterly impoverished, or completely broken down, as to be unfit to do anything. Settling out with scanty stores, these had become exhausted by the length of time they were on the way, or been taken from them by the Indians. Yet, living on fish and berries, such of these men as had fortitude to remain and make a trial, nearly all did well, some taking out large sums of gold, though having only the most rude and imperfect implements to work with. When, later in the season, provisions began to come in, prices ranged from one to two dollars a pound—yet so good were the diggings that the miners were vastly more concerned about the supply than the price. And so these men on the Upper Fraser lingered on through the fall, waiting impatiently for the completion of the new Lillooet trail, when it was expected provisions would be more abundant and cheap. This work, however, not being finished until too late to get in supplies for the winter, nearly the entire population was obliged to vacate this region on the arrival of cold weather.

And here, again, is another item, which in estimating the value of these mines by the yield of last season should be set down to their credit. In the prosecution of this valuable improvement, over five hundred men were abstracted from the mining population and kept on this work throughout the entire season. A good many were, also, in like manner engaged opening trails along the Fraser, or elsewhere, or in other pursuits foreign to the business of mining. This, with the extent to which labor was diverted for the purpose of building boats, digging ditches, chastising the Indians, and various other objects, taken in connection with the fact that much time was foolishly lost in waiting for the falling of the water, and the additional fact that mining operations were mostly confined to the Lower Fraser, the mere entrance to the mines, all goes to show that large allowance should be made when calculating the aggregate yield of those mines the past season.

As has been said, many of these serious interferences with mining industry, as well as much of the heavy expense alluded to, may be avoided the present season. The miner, on reaching Victoria, can proceed at once, and at a small cost, directly to the head of steamboat navigation on comfortable steamers, a number of which are already on the route, while one of our first class Sacramento river boats is about leaving to be employed in the same service. With these accommodations the vexatious and ruinous delays at Victoria, the dangerous passage of the Gulf, with the tedious toilsome, and still more perilous ascent of the rivers, with the hard work, exposure and expense incident to travel on this part of the journey in the early day, will be avoided. The portages will also be made the present season with much greater expedition, comfort and economy than before, as a sufficient number of animals will, no doubt, be brought upon them

as soon as required. This seems probable from the fact that over three hundred pack animals were wintered at Bonaparte river, for the purpose of being placed on the Lillooet route this spring, while a considerable number have been shipped from San Francisco, and several trains have set out from Oregon for the same destination. With these facilities, then, for reaching the centre of the Fraser gold fields, with the Indian tribes pacified or overawed, and a boundless extent of virgin mines stretched out in every direction, it would seem as if good wages ought to be made there this summer, notwithstanding provisions may be high, and other expenses somewhat greater than in California. For the benefit of such as may feel inclined to try their fortune in that quarter, the best routes to be taken will next be pointed out, to be followed by a notice of the mining rules and regulations in force, and a few practical observations of a general character.

ROUTES TO THE INTERIOR.

Parties bound to the Upper Fraser, that is to say any point over thirty or forty miles above Thompson's Fork, should go by the way of the new Lillooet route, as being not only the most safe and expeditious, but also the cheapest. In fact the route by the river, ascending through the cañons, is nearly impracticable except at a low stage of water, and even then is attended with much danger and delay, there being several portages where not only the cargo but the boat itself has to be lifted from the water carried over the rocks, and launched above the rapids. A trail has been commenced between Fort Yale and the Forks, which, when completed, as it will be this summer, will afford tolerable facilities for travel between these two points. In going to the vicinity of the Forks this trail or the river must necessarily be taken, but in going to the upper country, to which the great mass of the mining population must repair to find profitable employment, the route indicated should be chosen. The diggings below Thompson river, being mostly confined to the bars along the Fraser, have not capacity to employ more than four or five thousand men, while that portion of them below the cañons, and to which nearly the entire population was restricted last summer, would scarcely afford room for two thirds that number. Hence, in the event of any large influx of people, a majority would be obliged to betake themselves to the Upper Fraser.

Supposing this his point of destination, then, the miner takes the steamer at Victoria and proceeding to Langley, or such other point as this steamer connects with the lighter draft boats running above, he is there transferred to the latter, which carry him to Port Douglas, at the head of steamboat navigation. The distances on the route thus past over are as follows: From Victoria due north, to the mouth of Fraser river, passing through the canal de Harro, 65 miles; from the mouth of the