

Bygone Days of British Columbia

To Cariboo and Back

An Emigrant's Story of Journey to Gold Fields of B. C.

BY R. E. GOSNELL

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(The story of Bygone Days, which is at present dealing with an emigrant's tale of a journey to the gold fields of British Columbia, resumes as follows:—)

AFTER reaching Scotty's we only proceeded four miles further down, when we reached McLean's station, the best farm in the district for agriculture and for breeding cattle and horses. The water is excellent and the climate very favorable.

The Lakes—A Halt. Our next stage was to another thriving farm, "The Lakes," so named from several picturesque sheets of water near it. The owner of the estate was in the autumn in several ways, and made our small party of three an offer for our services. As our funds were now all but totally exhausted, we gladly fell in with the proposition. We remained here three months, rendering assistance in various departments of labor. Thus we first cut some reed and thatched the hay-stacks (a practice not used in America); then we cut some trees and erected a smithy's shop and forge. Our stay here was naturally pleasant; and all the weather was beautifully clear—scarcely even a cloud across the bright blue expanse of the heavens. That autumn in British Columbia will long be remembered, especially from its contrast with previous two months of weary toil, disappointment and hardships.

On the approach of winter we deemed it time to secure our retreat to the coast, took leave of our friends at "The Lakes," and resumed the changing scenes of pedestrian travel. Our first night out was spent on a narrow rocky ledge on the steep declivity of a mountain overhanging the Thompson river, which flowed more than a thousand feet beneath us, and as the darkness had overtaken us whilst midway in this dangerous pass, we were necessitated to remain in this most uncomfortable position till daybreak. We may here remark that this is

Very Little Twilight in British Columbia. Night succeeds the day more rapidly than at home. Thus we found it to our cost on this occasion. A more miserable night we never spent, cramped in our position, and, as the rain beat heavily upon us, drenched and shivering, yet afraid to stir, our thoughts turned with lively interest to memories of our English comfort, before we had thus been beguiled to cross ocean and mountain, for the unattainable treasures of this haunted El Dorado of the West. At 5 o'clock in the morning we gladly moved forward, and soon reached the ferry across the Thompson, ten miles from "The Lakes."

The means here adopted for crossing is only suitable for streams where there is a strong current; but with such it succeeds very well, as on the Trent, between Nottingham and Wilford. A strong cable is stretched permanently across the river. With this the flat ferry boat is connected by two ropes running in blocks from each end of the latter, to a single block sliding along the main cable. By keeping the boat in a diagonal position athwart the stream, the strength of the current impels the former along, as the blocks are successively shifted by a pull from the helmsman.

The ferry is the starting point for the well known depot of the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Kamloops or Thompson, sixty miles eastward, to the place a trail starts hence across the mountains. Our route, however, was still southward, down the river. Twelve miles farther brought us to Nicomine. From this point a good wagon road extends to Yale.

On our way hither from the ferry we witnessed

A Curious Spectacle. Some men were engaged in blasting the rocks beneath a tremendous precipice, for a continuation for the new wagon route on level ground, instead of the present trail over the lofty mountain, two thousand feet above them. Whilst we were watching the work awhile, we heard a rushing noise, and looking up saw a large body coming down headlong. Of course the poor beast was instantly killed. A small encampment of Indians near by immediately came hastening in to secure the tempting prize as a feast. Men and women, with papooses, all clustered round the carcass, which they speedily cut up and carried off in pieces. Their delight found expression in loud cries of "Muck-muck," i.e., something good to eat. They cooked the meat by holding it on sticks over the fire, warm the outside a little and then greedily devour and gnaw it, as dogs with a bone.

The blasting party engaged here consists of twenty-five or thirty miners, all of whom are already rich, but had returned down country, disappointed. Yet so thoroughly convinced were they of the existence of a large quantity of the precious metal at the diggings that all were resolved to try their success next spring. They declared "the gold is there, sure enough; and we are bound to have some of it before we go home." Several of them had already secured rich strikes in the mines, which they worked on till the rain and frost compelled their abandonment for the season; but they looked forward with confidence to the resumption of operations next spring. They heartily wished them success for they were a fine lot of men, true Britons to the core, bold as lions, and almost as

hardy and weather-proof as the rocks they were now quarrying.

Lytton. Twelve miles below Nicomine is Lytton, named after Sir E. B. Lytton Bulwer, when sometime secretary for the colonies. It is situated at the point where the Thompson unites with the Fraser. Here we received a kind invitation to spend the night in front of a blazing fire in a strong iron stove. After our usual devotions to the "weed" we especially enjoyed our warm stretch-out in such comfortable quarters, so secure from wind, rain and cold, for winter was now fairly commencing.

The Indians here, who were daily expecting the snow, had completed their winter huts. We descended into one of these, and may describe their nature. A circular hole is first excavated in the ground to the depth of seven feet, and having a diameter of twenty feet. This forms the body of the dwelling, or temporary cellar. The top is covered with a conical roof, elevated three feet above the surface of the ground, and having a hole in its centre for egress and entrance, and for the outlet of smoke. A tree notched at the side (resembling the bear-pole in the Regent's Park Zoological Gardens) serves alike for the central prop of the roof, and for the staircase of admission to the subterranean premises. A fire is lighted on the ground, immediately under the central hole at the top. Men, women and children, the latter perfectly destitute of clothing, are here.

Huddled Together. As each hut is inhabited by three or four families, We descended, and met with a civil, though gruff reception on our being announced as "King George men." We were glad to re-emerge into the open air, and found that the atmosphere above, as the foul air of these over-crowded dens is most oppressive to a stranger. Whilst thus hibernating, the Indians subsist on dried fish, berries and roots, and often on all three together, formed into a heterogeneous compound of soup. The roofs of these abodes are formed of strong logs thickly intertwined with brushwood, which, being well slanted and covered with earth, becomes almost impervious to rain and snow. The opening at the top is nearly closed; thus their condition is most unfavorable to health, and, as a consequence, many of them die of diseases thus contracted or aggravated. Last season was a very fatal one to them; numbers were swept away by the smallpox. When once seized with this deadly disease, recovery is impossible.

When staying at "The Lakes" we had seen a spot where about twelve wretched Indians had been buried by some of the settlers in the neighborhood. All had been seized with smallpox, and immediately on the appearance of the disease amongst them, their fellow countrymen had abandoned them to their inevitable fate. The dread of disease by the Indians has surprised us, for they are not at all afraid of death, but rather of violent or sudden death. The manner in which the sick or dying are thus forsaken by their companions is merely one amongst numerous illustrations of the degradation and depravity of human nature when not enlightened by the blessed

Influences of the Gospel, prompting a self-sink to seek the good of others. A beautiful contrast is afforded by the abundant instances where pestilence and death have been bravely braved even by tender and delicate Christian women, under the beneficent impulses of their holy religion. In the case of the abandoned Indians just referred to, they all died one after another, and remained unburied for days, until their bodies attracted the attention of some white neighbors, who by means of long poles and rakes managed to thrust the remains of the poor wretches into one common grave, dug for them hardly by the scene of their desolate death.

The miner's vice of gambling has been eagerly adopted by the poor Indians, who have learnt, in a manner of their own, to play at cards. Horses, blankets and even their last garments are staked on the game. We have met them thus literally stripped, after their losses in this way amongst themselves.

Fort Yale and the Coast. For the remainder of our journey coastward we were able to dispense with the use of a tent, as we found houses tolerably frequent along the line of route, and it was a double advantage to be thus sheltered at night, instead of in a leaky and frail tent, and also to be lightened of the burden of carrying the latter, which we now bestowed as a present upon some of our Indian acquaintances. The roads here were also a vast improvement upon the trails further inland; so that in less than three days from Lytton we reached Fort Yale, where we entirely divested ourselves of our packs, the heavy burdens which we had borne up and down the land for eight hundred miles.

Yale is a thriving town, likely to become an Important Emporium for up-country traffic. One of the wealthiest men and principal owners of land in the place was a rough but honest Yankee collier, popularly known as "Old York." He left the coal mines in the States some years ago for those in Vancouver Island, and then, on the discovery of gold in British Columbia, he emigrated hither, and is now trading that Yale must necessarily, from its position, become a prosperous station, opened a store here, and invested all his earnings in the purchase of land in the most likely positions. His clever anticipations are rapidly being realized, and his fortune is already secured. Yet he continues to wear the same style of dress as when a poor collier—still the open-necked blue shirt without cuffs, the thick boots, bare head and tight, mole-skin pants, reaching far short of the ankles. It may safely be presumed that his descendants will be less

anxious to manifest in so unmistakable a manner the lowly origin of their fortunes.

Having now reached the navigable portion of Fraser river again, we embarked on the steamer Reliance on the 10th of December, for New Westminster, and, after a run of ten hours, reached it the same evening. Here we observed that little alteration in place since our former visit. Next day we re-embarked on another steamer for Vancouver Island, and reached Victoria the same night. The latter place had undergone considerable and rapid changes during the past half year. A whole street had sprung up, and also many large buildings. We were pleased to find that Christmas festivities were not forgotten, but were busily being prepared for, as was indicated by the evergreen decorations and festoons in various parts of the town.

Concluding General Observations of the Colony.

Before concluding our reminiscences of British Columbia, we will make a few general observations, and in particular respecting the class of emigrants most likely to succeed there. Of all our colonies there is none where physical strength, patience and good temper are more essentially indispensable than here. It is utterly useless for persons of weak constitutions or feeble powers of endurance, to attempt the expedition to the up-country mines of Cariboo and the creeks. Again, we would strongly dissuade any of our city friends from emigrating hither. Men accustomed to agriculture and other hard manual labor, to mining and quarrying, and to ordinary skilled mechanical labor, such and such only, are the class, in general, whom we would invite to British Columbia for the present. The high prices of provisions and stores have already seen their maximum, and will probably decrease as the roads become more developed, the traffic directed into regular channels, and the agricultural resources of the country rendered more available.

The development of good roads is being carried on with the most laudable energy and promptitude by the colonial government, and, whilst laying a firm basis for the increased prosperity of the country, is affording most valuable and timely employment to numbers of emigrants who have been unable to reach the mines or have been disappointed on their arrival there. These facilities for transit will obviate the excessively arduous, expensive and hazardous trials of the early days, and along terrific precipices.

We would not recommend intending emigrants to burden themselves with a large and expensive outfit for their land journey, for the reason that the mountain on either side form a splendid protection against the rigors of winter and make it an ideal stock country.

COQUITLAM DISTRICT HAS EXHIBITION

Display is Well Up to That in Former Years.

New Westminster, Sept. 25.—A large number of Westminster people went out on Thursday to Coquitlam for the purpose of taking in the annual fruit, flower, grain and stock show of that district, the exhibition being well up to that of former years in all the different classes. Amongst the Westminster men noted admiring the displays were R. Jardine, R. J. Rickman, M. Ryall, A. W. Gray, D. Walker, and about a score of football enthusiasts who accompanied the Rovers, the local team being matched to play against Coquitlam.

The football match was fairly evenly contested until half time, neither side being able to score. In the second half, however, the Rovers got the best of the Coquitlam boys, netting the last two goals. However, Coquitlam failed to score, Coquitlam missed two difficult penalty kicks during the game, but otherwise made a good impression on the followers of the game, the match being the first appearance of the Rovers' lineup.

The Westminster team lined up as follows: Barbare, goal; Cunningham, Huntington, full backs; Bruce, Lock, Cars, half backs; McGowan, Colclough, Reland, Hayes, Hill, forwards. S. Gibson refereed.

The fair was formally opened by W. J. Manson, M. L. A. for Dewdney, who referred to the excellence of the display in a few selected sentences.

COAL AT HOWE SOUND.

Vancouver, Sept. 25.—Outcroppings of coal which is believed to exist in paying quantities, have been discovered in a small cove near Horseshoe bay on Howe sound. The discovery was made by Messrs. Thomas Williamson and Henry Corson, two timber cruisers, who have been spending some time up the coast.

Mr. Williamson has had considerable mining experience and knows that the coal taken from the surface is high grade bituminous. The find was made quite accidentally a few days ago. The action of the waves and weather had disintegrated a sufficient quantity of the coal to be easily collected and burnt on the camp fire, making a fine heap of glowing coals.

Further search along the shore of the cove revealed three more outcroppings, two of which were rather small, but one was nearly two feet in width. Messrs. Williamson and Corson are now securing the coal, and will leave about the end of the week to do some preliminary work on their discovery before taking steps to secure coal mining rights.

THE SIMON FRASER CENTENARY NEXT WEEK

Events in Early History of the Province Will Be Recalled to Memory at New Westminster

The celebration of the centenary of the noted explorer and traveller, Simon Fraser, at New Westminster next week promises to be the greatest event of the kind ever held in British Columbia. The Fraser river city will this year be the centre of attraction for historians and scholars, and in order to make the event a great one and of lasting memory, a statue of the great discoverer has been erected and this will be formally unveiled by the premier, a native of the city of New Westminster, on Wednesday next.

The exhibit will be of two kinds, pictorial and ethnological. There will be from fifteen hundred to two thousand photographs, prints, and paintings which tell something of the life and growth of the province and of the builders of empire on this Pacific coast. The whole affair will be in charge of the provincial architect, but T. O. S. Schofield will have charge of the exhibit from the provincial library, and Dr. Newcombe, the noted ethnologist and all-round scientist, will have charge of an Indian exhibit illustrating the social customs of the Indians that Fraser met on his journey through the province.

Among the notables who will be present on the occasion will be Governor Meade, of the State of Washington, the president of the Historical Society of Portland, Oregon; Prof. Meany of the State of Washington university at Seattle; Judge Hanford and Senator Fyles, of Seattle, etc. Mr. Ezra Meeker, of Puyallup, Wash., who is the pioneer grower of the Pacific coast, having begun his operations in this particular branch of agriculture

try through which he passed. There will be many of the old-fashioned blankets that the Indians used before the advent of the white men; baskets indicating the development of the art up to that time; implements of war, fishing and hunting; and also important and various photographs illustrating their sociology from the scientific point of view. This will form one of the most important parts of the exhibit and will doubtless prove the best selected and most historical.

The library collection will include some of the oldest and rarest books connected with the history of the West and of British Columbia in particular. Some rare and valuable old charts of the Pacific and Northwest coast from the time of the Spanish voyages to the present. A very notable exhibit will be a map of the Fraser and its tributaries indicating the track of Simon Fraser, and the habitat of the Indian tribes which he met, as well as pictorial views of the places of most interest in his notable journey where the redoubtable discoverer had his most hairbreadth escapes.

The sword that Simon Fraser wore and also his original journals as well as those of John Stewart, one of his lieutenants, will be on view. These and the other exhibits which are too numerous to mention particularly, will form a collection of such historical and scientific interest that all who care to devote into the days which have passed will have a feast such as has not been prepared for them ever before on this coast and seldom in the history of the world.

New Westminster's memorial to Simon Fraser will be erected in Prospect

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will be the longest remembered. After his return from the Pacific, Fraser proceeded to Eastern Canada in 1809 to report to the company. His achievements were learned with much interest, and in partial recognition of his service the company promoted him to one of the highest positions in the concern, and it is stated by various historians that he was also tendered rewards by the government and other public bodies. He remained in the position of chief factor in the west until 1821, when he retired, and, returning east, married a Miss McDowell of Matilda, Ont., thereafter residing some years in Montreal. Later in life he returned to the township of Cornwall, where he had passed his childhood, and died at St. Andrews, in Cornwall township, at the age of 86, in 1892. His nearest living relative is his niece, Miss Charlotte Fraser, of Hamilton.

One hundred years had rolled away on July 31st last since Fraser accomplished his memorable voyage of discovery.

Each succeeding year of development will bring increased honor to Simon Fraser and other noted explorers who were the first to plant the Union Jack in the far west, and preserve the country for the Empire.

LANGLEY EXHIBITION

PROVES GREAT SUCCESS

Many of Prize Winners Will Be Seen at New Westminster Next Week.

New Westminster, Sept. 25.—The annual agricultural exhibition held at Langley on Wednesday was the most successful in the history of the old Hudson's Bay trading post, and the judges declared that the exhibit of horses was the best ever seen in British Columbia outside of Victoria or New Westminster.

The weather was ideal and early in the day the farmers and visitors began to gather at the fair grounds. By noon everything was in readiness for the formal opening which was placed shortly after 1 o'clock, the opening address being delivered by Robert Jardine, of this city.

The large number of exhibitors and visitors moved through the hall and around the grounds to inspect the exhibits, which were excellent. The livestock, particularly the horses, was the centre of attraction, there being over fifty entries, and the number including some of the finest and best heavy draft animals. Most of the prize-winners will be exhibited at the provincial exhibition at New Westminster next week.

The show of cattle was not quite up to last year, the dairy stock being a little short, although what was shown was in good shape. The display of sheep and swine was about the same as previous shows.

The interior of the hall was a revelation of the great agricultural possibilities of Langley district to the many visitors, almost every kind of produce being shown. The dairy display was only good, but one of the prettiest of the kind seen this season, while the field and garden produce were also splendid. The judges of the dairy department declared that he had never seen as fine a display of butter anywhere. There was only one quality, he declared, and that was the best. The exhibit also included some fine samples of cheese.

The second story of the exhibition hall was the principal attraction for the women, the fancy work, floral display and samples of the cooking are being shown on that floor.

An interesting programme was held during the afternoon, including foot races and a baby show. The principal event was a lacrosse match between Langley and Maple Ridge, which was won by the latter by four goals to one after a hard struggle.

The officers of the Langley Agricultural Society state that next year's fair will be far ahead of every other this year's exhibition, and that extensive improvements will be carried on in the grounds, which will greatly increase the accommodation. A race track will also be built.

The entire exhibit of fruit and field, garden and dairy produce in the building was donated to the society by the exhibitors, and the entire collection is now being packed and shipped to this city to be shown in the district competition at the big fair here next week, and Langley is determined to capture first honors. The exhibit will be in charge of Wm. MacAdam and Secretary McIntosh.

VICTORIAN ENTERTAINER.

Cumberland, Sept. 23.—Miss Maude Underhill, of Victoria, arrived in Cumberland by Monday's boat and gave a recital in Cumberland hall in the evening which was fairly well patronized. Miss Underhill is an excellent reciter and was fully up to all promises and every selection she gave on Monday night was well received.

On Tuesday night Miss Underhill presented a very charming monologue entitled "Old Maid and Matron." In light scenes with complete changes of costume for each scene, she gave an interesting as it followed the life of a modern society girl from childhood to old age. This evening she will give an entertainment in Courtenay.

MY LOVE O' THE MOUNTAIN.

Oh, she's bonnie as the roan tree,
My love o' the mountain side;
She's dearer to me than the sea,
An' I wad she were my bride.

She's red lipped as the clustered berry,
Her hair as the roan's; her steen
Her face fair as an' blithe an' merry
Than a face adown the glen.

I courted her 'neath the roan tree,
My lassie wif' eyes as blue,
An' what she said was nuckle tae me,
Though little, I wean, tae you.

I kissed my love 'neath the roan tree
One day in the past mornin',
An' a shy word whispered aye tae me,
Tell me that her heart was mine.

In Turkey, heifers do not come into control of their private fortunes until they marry.



SIMON FRASER.

some thirty years ago, has the distinction of being among the very first of the pioneers to these semi-savage and wholly undeveloped regions, having made the arduous trip in an old-time prairie schooner. Since then he has returned to his old home in three east in a similar schooner, and he will be present with this vehicle at the celebration.

Other visitors of note who are to be there by special invitation will be Dr. Schaffer, professor of history in the University of Oregon; E. C. Bagley, of Seattle; and it is also probable that Judge Hanford and Senator Fyles of Seattle will be there. These, with all the great men of British Columbia, will make a notable array of talent that should make the bones of the old discoverer turn in their grave.

The pictorial collection which will be exhibited there will form the nucleus of a historical art gallery in the Parliament buildings. Many of the pictures have not yet been made, but they will include such subjects as King George's Landing, the straits which are named after him; Balboa viewing the Pacific from the heights on the isthmus of Panama; the landing of Drake; the coming of Pecos and the ship Santiago; the Cook in North harbor; the famous meeting of Captain Vancouver and Captain Quadra; and the coming of Sir Alexander Mackenzie and the first view of the Pacific from the first far west. Fraser's ability came rapidly to light and when the company decided to push their operations into the country beyond the Rockies, he was chosen to carry out the task. Accordingly, the year 1806 found him on the western slope of the mountains establishing the first trading post, which he named Fort Macleod, in honor of a friend. Fraser remained in New California, as the country then was called, about four years, during which time he located many trading posts, opened commerce with the Indians over a large section of country, and also explored the Fraser river, for which performance he

will be the longest remembered. After his return from the Pacific, Fraser proceeded to Eastern Canada in 1809 to report to the company. His achievements were learned with much interest, and in partial recognition of his service the company promoted him to one of the highest positions in the concern, and it is stated by various historians that he was also tendered rewards by the government and other public bodies. He remained in the position of chief factor in the west until 1821, when he retired, and, returning east, married a Miss McDowell of Matilda, Ont., thereafter residing some years in Montreal. Later in life he returned to the township of Cornwall, where he had passed his childhood, and died at St. Andrews, in Cornwall township, at the age of 86, in 1892. His nearest living relative is his niece, Miss Charlotte Fraser, of Hamilton.

One hundred years had rolled away on July 31st last since Fraser accomplished his memorable voyage of discovery.