

routes starting from Bellingham Bay or Victoria. The land-route through Oregon Territory has many advantages. The distance from Portland to the Dalles, by steam-boat, is about one hundred miles; fare, eleven dollars. Here horses can be purchased, and the necessary equipments. From the Dalles, the road strikes out into the open country, skirting the eastern base of the cascades to Fort O'Kanagan, crossing Columbia River at Priest's Rapids, thence up the O'Kanagan River to the Sammilkimo River, then along Lake O'Kanagan to its head, and thence north-east to Shuswap Lake, which supplies one of the tributaries of Thompson's River. The distance from the Dalles by this route is three hundred and thirty miles. Another route, by the way of Walla-Walla, lengthens the distance forty miles. Or, again, the water-route by the Columbia may be taken as far as Fort Colville. If the statement be a true one, it is a great argument for this route, that the Hudson's Bay Company, though having forts all along Fraser River, have for years shipped their goods by way of Fort Vancouver, the Dalles, and Columbia River, to Fort Colville, and through the mining country.

At the very threshold of the inquiry as to the richness of the gold-fields and their extent, we are staggered by the most conflicting accounts. The California papers teem with letters from special and transient correspondents, from miners and the friends of miners, and after sifting the grain of fact out of bushels of imaginative chaff, there still remain singular contradictions in the testimony of apparently equally well-informed sources.

One writer pronounces the whole Fraser River excitement a grand humbug, first started by real-estate owners in Victoria; another swears that he has handled twenty-seven pounds of gold, the product of a few weeks' labor. To-day we are told of a man who offers eighteen dollars an ounce for Fraser River gold, and cannot get a grain; to-morrow of another who sits with boots, like those of Brian O'Linn,

'With the woolly side out and the skinny side in,'

and saturated with quicksilver, swinging in the stream a day, and at night wrings them out, and finds one hundred and fifty dollars stuck to the hair. After a very extensive perusal of all the testimony which has appeared in the letters of Fraser River correspondents to the newspapers of California and of the Atlantic cities, and a somewhat careful consideration of its weight and of the influence of a mania in helping gold-finders to see double, we are impelled to the conclusion that gold exists in Fraser River and its tributaries, in sufficient quantities to make it an object of profitable search for a portion of the year. That it exists in quantities such as were found in the surface diggings of early California days, we do not believe; but that it pays better for experienced miners who have not the capital to buy the expensive quartz-crushing machines with which gold is obtained in California, we are compelled to think.