

## THE COLONY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

---

The golden auspices under which the colony of British Columbia came into existence fittingly presaged the illustrious destiny which all thinking men now recognize is reserved for her. The fitful light which played around her morning has indeed passed away, but it has been succeeded by the strong, steady glow of human industry and human progress, and beneath these happy rays a wealth more beneficial in its influence than that extracted from gold mines has been developed. And even the precious metal, the existence of which in her soil first attracted the attention of the world to her shores, has been but superficially touched upon, that which lies hidden in her mountains offering a larger reward to systematic labor than ever did her pactolean streams to the rough miner of early days.

The existence of gold in British Columbia had been known to the Hudson's Bay traders long previous to the rush of 1858. As early as 1852 the Queen Charlotte Islands and Skeena River had been prospected, but without successful results, although indications were everywhere abundant. In 1856 and 1857 Chief Trader McLean, then stationed at Kamloops, had obtained considerable quantities from Indians, and in the latter year he had transmitted three hundred ounces to Victoria. Two American prospectors, named McDonald and Adams, had also mined on the Thompson River in 1857, and had collected a large quantity of dust. On their way to California McDonald killed Adams, secured the gold and displayed it at Olympia. The story told by McDonald was verified and the news thus conveyed shot like a flame through Oregon and California and kindled hope and desire in the hearts of thousands.

Governor Douglas learning of the ferment which the reports had occasioned understood what the result would be, and in anticipation of a rush issued a proclamation in December, 1857, forbidding all persons to dig or disturb the earth or search for gold until authorized on that behalf by Her Majesty's Colonial Government, and he imposed a license of ten shillings a month, afterwards increased to five