

BRITISH
COLUMBIA
AND
VANCOUVER
ISLAND.

from Oregon or California by sea. Their detention at the first place of landing created Victoria. The bars on the Fraser were gradually worked out. Now they are abandoned to the labours of Chinamen. But year by year the summer immigrants pushed farther into the interior, still by the valley of the great river. Finally Cariboo was discovered, and its prodigious wealth attracted large numbers of miners, who were fed and supplied from Victoria. Driven from their work by the severe climate in the winter, the "Caribooites" spent some time and much money in that town, and added to the profits of the merchants who had monopolized their market during the working season. There were no large settlements in British Columbia; it was only a Colony in name. There was a gold mine at one end of a line of road; a seaport town (under a different Government) at the opposite terminus.

11. Here was the real cause of the ill-feeling between the two Colonies. The settlers on the Fraser paid gold-miners' duties on all they consumed, while the people of the Island profited by the success of the diggers and paid no import duties. Everything was done to foster Victoria. Where public officers served both Colonies, the Island gave its own half-pay; the full salary was drawn from the heavily-taxed British Columbians, and the whole, this one salary and a half, was spent on the Island. Imperial interests were assumed to be involved in the welfare of Victoria, and people affected to believe that great destinies were in store for the town, they had early begun to name the "Queen City of the Pacific." Meanwhile every man on the mainland knew that the town was kept alive by the British Columbian mines. They petitioned for separation, and they got it. Now, at all events, the proceeds of their taxation are spent among them. Trade is beginning to establish itself on the Fraser. On the other hand Victoria, descending to common sense, seeks, at the sacrifice of her free port and constitution, a close union with the Colony whose wealth is her support.

12. Cariboo was the great customer for Victoria; but Cariboo, with its prodigious wealth, has been found not to be "poor man's diggings," not competent, therefore, to support a very large population. The mines are of limited extent, the gold lies deep, and is expensive to extract. The number of spring immigrants began early to fall off, and in 1865 was smaller than usual. There was no dearth of labourers. Cariboo warned off fresh comers, as every place was full. So it seemed, for with a diminished population, the yield of gold was in the proportion of 9 to 5 as compared with the preceding year. Wages were steady at 40s. a day, and the necessities of life far lower in price than they had ever been before. Victoria continued to do the principal business of these mines; but the population to feed was comparatively small, and Victoria suffered.

13. So did British Columbia to a certain extent. Road-side houses on the Cariboo line became bankrupt as traffic decreased, by diminished immigration and accelerated travelling. The general condition of the Colony was, however, prosperous. The customs' receipts at New Westminster were, by the last account which has reached me, 15,000*l.* in excess of the corresponding period of 1864. I learn that the British Columbian capital "is making great progress; houses and wharves, clearing and fencing "going on everywhere this autumn." And the most hopeful sign of all is beginning to show itself: a disposition on the part of the miners to purchase land in New Westminster or its neighbourhood, and commence the systematic colonization of the Lower Fraser. These benefits in no way assist Victoria, nor can it appreciate the improvement in the general condition of Cariboo, which now induces many miners to winter there instead of squandering their money in Vancouver Island or San Francisco.

14. To the merchant of Victoria the depression he felt in 1865 appeared to extend over British Columbia; but he could only see the valley of the Fraser, while a vaster view lay open before the eyes of the Government of New Westminster. The usual wave of immigration was seen to come to us in equal, if not larger volume than in former years. Many miners were, doubtless, prevented by the Victorian outcry from coming direct to the English Colonies, and the more united Americans secured the preference for their own gold fields of Boisé or Cœur d'Hélène. But disappointed hopes soon drove thousands in search of richer deposits. From the sea to the Rocky Mountains, on both sides of the boundary line, the country swarmed with eager prospectors, who rushed backwards and forwards as reports circulated that the gold which all knew to exist had at last been found.

15. Late in 1864 important discoveries had been made near the British Kootenay Pass of the Rocky Mountains, in our territory. It was first through American newspapers that I became aware of a rich and prosperous mining town existing within our limits, about 500 miles due east of New Westminster. Although the Kootenay mines could, at first, be only approached by passing through United States territory, we soon extended British institutions over the new diggings, established Courts of Justice, and collected