

most unqualified sense his own servant, and learning to minister to his own wants in a multiplicity of ways, in which, under the ordinary conditions of civilized existence, he would employ the agency of others. By the people of the Colony generally, little use, as compared with what might be, is made of the means of sustenance so plentifully, and in such rich variety, provided in the spontaneous products of flood and field. The cultivation of the soil, and the raising of stock—for which the country is peculiarly adapted—have hitherto been much neglected, and are only now beginning to receive their due share of attention. The produce of the farm and the dairy, and most of the common articles of food, both animal and vegetable, cost high. Still more may this be said of all articles of clothing, and all articles of household furniture; while anything in the department of hired service—hired labour of any description—must be paid for at rates which may fairly be reckoned exorbitant.

Leaving this point—the vastness of the territory over which the population is dispersed may next be noticed—that population, viewed in relation to the extent of territory, being small indeed. Such a representation might with truth be given even if the entire mass of inhabitants, native and foreign, of all tribes and tongues, were taken into account; but the representation holds emphatically true when we confine our attention exclusively, as at present we do, to the *white* population. The number belonging to this class, indeed, does not appear to be very definitely ascertained, and any estimate of it must, accordingly, be more or less conjectural. In the periodical press we have observed it rated sometimes as high as 10,000, and sometimes as low as 8,000. In the year 1862, when the gold fever had not yet subsided, it was said, on seemingly sufficient authority, to amount, without taking in the residents in Vancouver Island, to 7,000. On the other hand, in the "Colonial List" for last year, it was stated as being, for the whole united Colony, between 10,000 and 16,000—a somewhat vague but undoubtedly an exaggerated estimate. Whatever the precise number may in reality be, we may, without much risk of error, assume it as not exceeding from 9,000 to 10,000 persons. These are found scattered at many detached points, on the shores of Vancouver Island, on some of the smaller islands of the Gulf, along the course of the Fraser, and in the gold-mining districts, and it is necessary only along with this, to bear in mind that between the southern and northern extremities of Vancouver Island lies a distance of above 300 miles, and that from the mouth of the Fraser to reach the gold-fields of Cariboo, a journey of from 400 to 500 miles must be undertaken—to perceive how utter is the disproportion between territory and population. According to the "Colonial List" already referred to, the area of British Columbia, including Vancouver Island, may be roughly calculated at 220,000 square miles.

The chief centres of population are Victoria and Nanaimo in Vancouver Island, New Westminster, with the country about the lower Fraser, and Barkerville in Cariboo; aside from these, the settlements generally are few and far between. The state of things just described will serve to show how impossible is the formation, in particular localities, of self-supporting congregations, or of congregations which may, with reason, be expected to make any considerable approximation towards being self-supporting; while the distance between the different settlements, and the cost of travel—much of which must be accomplished by hired private conveyance—raise a formidable hindrance in the way of uniting several distinct localities under a common pastoral supervision, especially so as wholly or in great part to dispense with the necessity for aid from foreign sources.