

The rush of diggers into the new country will ensure for it an active though temporary settlement; but those mineral products which it possesses, and which can only be reached by steady energy and the employment of capital, will retain a considerable permanent population, and give that solidity of wealth which alone would warrant the construction of a line of railway through a difficult and otherwise unproductive country. Throughout the Saskatchewan country there are deposits of coal, which, although not to be compared in quality with that we are familiar with in this country, are yet of considerable value. Coal of a similar geological formation, but of somewhat better quality, also occurs on Vancouver's Island and the opposite mainland, near the mouth of Fraser River; and at the former locality it is worked, and finds a market as ordinary fuel, for the manufacture of gas, and, above all in importance to us, for the supply of our steam navy. It answers well for the generation of steam; and the occurrence of this coal on Vancouver's Island, which possesses magnificent harbourage, renders that colony a valuable link in a chain of communication with China and the East Indies, by way of a route across the North American continent.