

In 1857 great excitement was produced, even in England, by the report of gold being found there, in such quantities as promised to raise the hitherto unknown land to the rank of the gold-fields of California and Australia. The correspondent of the "Times" wrote home and spoke of the country as an El Dorado for gold, and a paradise for agriculture,—dipping his pen in the colours of a rich fancy. Soon some 30,000 men had invaded the quiet of the old Hudson Bay Company's desert solitude; and strained to the utmost the simple resources of their patriarchal system of government. But still the cry was "They come." In canoes, in boats, in steamers, in ships, and in almost everything but rafts and by swimming, from almost everywhere, they swarmed to Victoria, the capital of Vancouver's Island, which lies with regard to the continent of Columbia as Ireland to the island of England. The pious and humble-spirited Mr. Cridge (now Dean of Victoria), who was chaplain then to the Hudson Bay Company, wrote home to the "Colonial and Continental Church Society," imploring them to send him instant help, for that he was almost at his wits end with the sudden inundation. In the mean time the British Government was not idle, the first colonizing party, under the charge of the accomplished and amiable Colonel Moody, R.E., was organized. With him the committee took counsel, and put out an advertisement for a suitable clergyman, whilst actively collecting funds for a special mission. Some applied for information, and some candidates were all but accepted, I believe; their friends however, interposed, fearing such expatriation, and the arrangement fell through. But time went on, and it was feared no answer would be received in time for the clergyman to accompany Colonel Moody. That rare spirit, Mr. (now Dr. Mesac) Thomas, Bishop of Goulburn, was the main-spring of the "Colonial and Continental Church Society," at that time. He said, "Well, we will insert the advertisement once more." That "once more" was the very time when it met my eye. I was lying on the sofa, seriously weakened by my share of work amongst 30,000 souls in the parish of St. Mary-lebone. Strange to say, I had, under an undefined impulse, already warehoused my furniture and gone into lodgings, so that I was ready for an almost instantaneous start. Under the guidance of God's good providence, the way opened, I seemed to be called, and "I went into Arabia"—not "Felix," but "Petraëa,"—Stony Arabia, indeed!

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