

the vast supply of natural gas, which has drawn together a rush of population, and factory towns have sprung up at its bidding.

The precious metals and stones are doing their part in developing new countries. California, Australia, British Columbia and the South African republic have in turn been peopled by miners. Towns sprang up, first in canvas, then in wood, till by the exhaustion of surface and unskilled diggings, technical skill and division of labour became necessary; capital became more powerful than labour, companies controlled the mining by machiney, and the town founded in haste either dwindles away, as may be seen at Silver City and at Golden, in our own Rocky Mountains, or else develops the agricultural resources of the region, so that its next generation is transformed into a prosperous farming community. When the first discovery of diamonds was made at Kimberly, South Africa, a few miners' huts sprang up in a desert region; now Kimberly is a town of over 20,000 inhabitants, with a railway from the coast, and with the most approved system of water-works and electric lights. When the diamond supply fails, as eventually it must, the frontier trade will suffice to support there a prosperous town, but no such site would ever have come into existence in so desert a land without being developed by the valuable products of its mines. The country dependent on minerals alone has been likened to a man depending on a liberal expenditure of his capital for prosperity—the more lavishly he spends it the wealthier he seems, but in reality the poorer he becomes.

With plants and animals this is different, and the wealth of a people in live produce corresponds to the interest of a large capital. They have no fixed natural distribution, but can be carried to new regions; by cultivation and breeding, their value and number can be increased.

Timber may be regarded as a typical natural vegetable product, but large supplies of it do not concentrate population except under certain conditions of water-power, etc., and even then, when the supply is exhausted, unless something else takes its place, the town rapidly declines. Even here in our own city, where the business of rafting used to be largely carried on, the development of the forests by railways piercing their midst has diverted or destroyed this business, and the square timber that for years afforded work to hundreds in the rafting