

ing interest at 6 per cent. per annum, which will doubtless be readily negotiated. A duty of 10 per cent. on merchandise, levied at New Westminster, a few tolls, and a miner's tax of £1 per annum, constitute the revenue of the colony.

During the spring and summer months of 1858 from 20,000 to 30,000 people, nearly all of them men in the prime of life, emigrated chiefly from California to British Columbia, *via* Victoria. This town was until their arrival a quiet English village, with a large picketed fort. It contained about three hundred whites, a few coloured people; and an Indian village across the harbour sheltered a varying population of the aborigines.

Previous to the gold excitement, exclusive legislation in California caused a number of well-to-do and more intelligent of its coloured population to seek a home on this British soil; some of them purchased building lots for £20, which, in a few weeks afterwards, were worth £600 to £800. These people are sometimes openly insulted by rowdies, which causes trouble, and their great desire to be on a perfect social equality with the whites, against the latter's inclination, produces an unpleasant feeling. They are an industrious and well-behaved class, and the outskirts of the town are ornamented with their neat homesteads. A great majority of the Frazer River prospectors remained on the banks of the lower part of its swift yellow stream, waiting for its subsidence. After risking their lives in

old tubs of steamships on the Pacific, and again in crossing the gulf, developing their muscles by pulling wearily miles after miles against the stream, stung intolerably by mosquitoes, and half-baked by a fiery sun, or drenched with rains, these men, living on coarse ship fare, had their patience buoyed up by imagining the glittering mines of gold before them, but not get-at-able just then; they planted sticks at the water's edge, to denote any change, and many hopes at a slight fall were blighted by sudden and vigorous rises: at length frost set in above, the banks and bars became bare, and their eyes were opened, for, excepting at a few places, all they could earn was barely sufficient to find them food, winter was near, and, panic-struck, declaring themselves victims of the greatest humbug ever got up by steamboat men and traders, they rushed through Victoria back to California as rapidly as two or three steam-ships a week could take them. Such was the haste to leave this "howling wilderness," as an eloquent barrister termed it, that several lives were lost and many limbs frozen by a rash attempt to reach Fort Langley over a supposed trail: the snow fell, they lost their way, the cold became intense; but making a fire, they passed a miserable night, and next morning they plunged forward through the snow and thicket until their strength gave way and they sank exhausted. Captain J. Wright, on his steamboat the *Surprise*, which, whistling, kept near the bank, was the means of saving many; but his utmost exertions