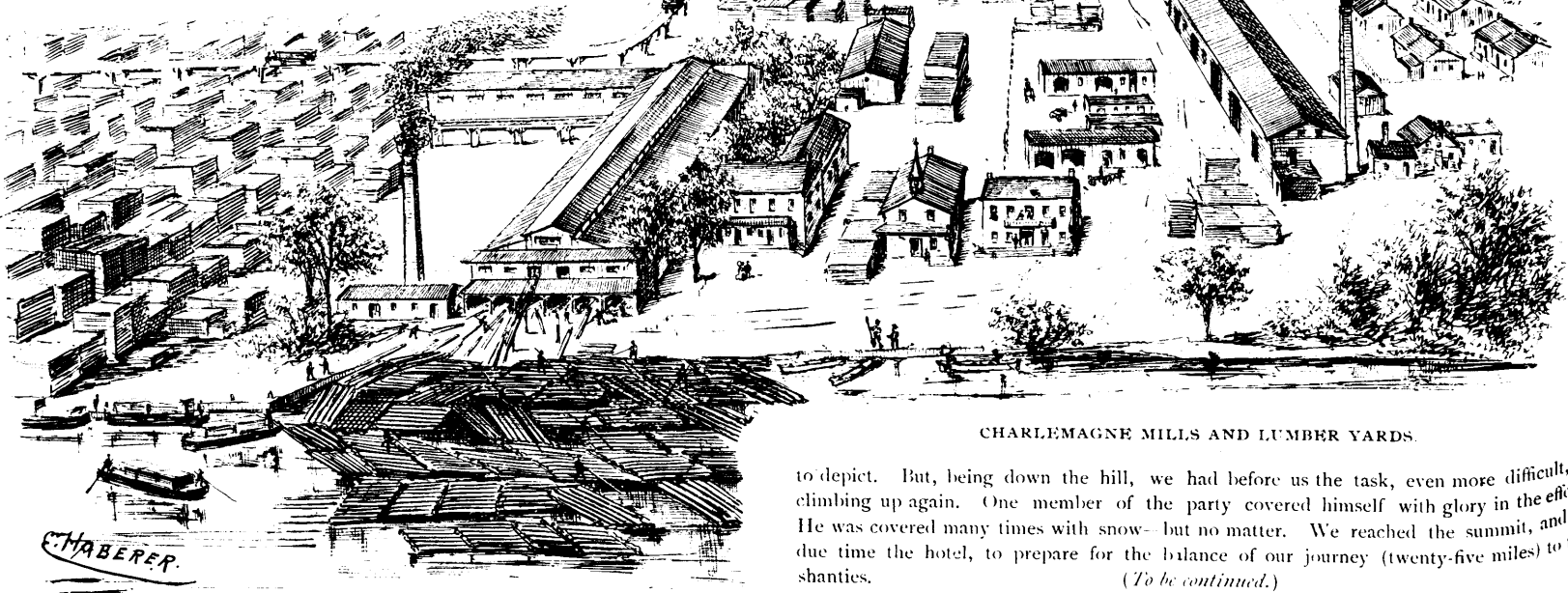


very deep, the difficulty of our task may easily be imagined. My friends were equal, however, to the occasion. Should I be the one to falter? Perish the thought! I resolved to go. Steadying myself by the branches of the firs and spruces, I got as far as the steepest part of the descent, when my feet suddenly resigned again in favour of my head and shoulders. Down I went, headforemost towards the bottom. The bottom? There wasn't any. I was so completely buried that but for the prompt and energetic exertion of my friends nothing short of a spring thaw would ever have discovered me.

We reached the bottom at last, and were more than repaid. The falls from this point of view presented an aspect words fail



CHARLEMAGNE MILLS AND LUMBER YARDS.

to depict. But, being down the hill, we had before us the task, even more difficult, of climbing up again. One member of the party covered himself with glory in the effort. He was covered many times with snow—but no matter. We reached the summit, and in due time the hotel, to prepare for the balance of our journey (twenty-five miles) to the shanties.

(To be continued.)



Our unexpected visitor, the snow, has left us as suddenly as it came. British Columbia, like a coquettish young maiden, thought that she would just try on the stately, nun-like draperies of her demure elder sisters; but after arraying herself in their snowy folds and admiring her fair image reflected in the blue waters of the Pacific, she decided that her own bright robe of varied colours was more becoming. So she has decked herself once more in the rainbow tints of softly gleaming sapphire seas and tawny yellow sands, of tender green foliage and misty purple mountains, while her fragile snow-veil, cast aside to the winds of heaven, is torn in a thousand shining shreds that even now are drifting across the sky, or nestling into the hollows of the distant hills. And surely some tiny fragments must have fallen on the moist brown earth below, where the white daisies are breaking through the leaves. In the woods the slender stems of the spirea are covered with buds, and the curling fronds of the ferns are pushing upward through the green, wet moss. In a few weeks the delicate maiden-hair will cluster in shady places, and the wild flowers will be in bloom.

The spring-time comes early in British Columbia, and the season seems to have a charm peculiarly its own. In this new country we are, as it were, so close to the heart of Nature that we can catch the first faint throb of her awakening.

Here, indeed, is to be found the "forest primeval" in all its loneliness and majesty, and to him who explores these unknown solitudes comes in its fullest degree this sense of intimate communion with her most solitary moods. Great trunks of giant trees loom up on every side in enormous masses, knotted over with strange vegetations and hoary with age, their rugged columns soaring upward until they are lost in the gloom of interlacing branches far above. From these droop fantastic garlands of trailing feathery moss, caught up in intricate tracery from bough to bough, or sweeping downward to the earth in screens of softest shadow—mysterious curtains drawn across yet more secret recesses where the foot of man has never dared to penetrate. The complete isolation from all human life, the gigantic size of the Douglas firs with their suggestions of

the lapse of centuries, the density and almost tropical luxuriance of the undergrowth and profound stillness and solemnity that broods over all, unbroken by even the song of birds, makes the British Columbian forest seem like some enchanted region of silence and dreams.

This is a land of contrasts, and to a stranger nothing is more surprising than the short distance that there may be between scenes like these and the busy centres of traffic. To those especially who have been accustomed to the cultivated landscapes and pastoral glades of England, it seems strange to see cities hewn, as it were, out of the wilderness, surrounded by impenetrable forests, and yet possessing all the evidences of civilization and refinement. Again, another contrast is that between the more rugged character of the coast and the fertile plains and valleys of the interior, between the wooded heights of Vancouver and the rich farming lands of the Fraser or the sunny slopes of Nicola and Okanagan. Every description of land, every class of produce, every kind of scenery, every resource of mining, fishing, commerce or agriculture, every stage of progress and every variety of climate can be found within the limits of British Columbia. Can an ambitious people ask for more than this?

A charter has just been granted by the Provincial Legislature to a railway to run from Vancouver northward to Peace River Valley and on to Alaska. This line will open up an immense stretch of country hitherto little known, but which, from all accounts, is rich in minerals, containing vast deposits of coal and extensive areas of land suitable for agricultural purposes. This road, visionary as the idea may seem at present, may yet become a link to connect the proposed Siberian railway with our own trans-continental line. The prospect may appear a remote one, but events in Russia are slowly tending towards its accomplishment. A report from a commission of engineers is now under the consideration of the Imperial Government; and when the Czarevitch arrives in Siberia it is said that he will make an official announcement of the decision that has been reached on the subject. The number of obstacles that have been overcome in building the Canadian Pacific Railway give reason to hope that before long the still greater difficulties of the trans Siberian route will be successfully surmounted.

A series of lectures on astronomy, given by Mr. A. T. De Sury, of Whetham College, have been attended by hundreds of the people of Vancouver. Mr. De Sury is an earnest and forcible speaker, and possesses the art, not

always fully understood, of presenting his subject to an audience in a clear and interesting manner, avoiding all technical expressions which might obscure it to the minds of non-scientific listeners. The course of lectures to be given by the different professors, and open to the public, includes, besides those already given on astronomy, the subjects of "Coast Changes in High Altitudes," "Volcanoes," "Heat," "Light" and "Greek Art." That the privilege of attending them is appreciated by the citizens is proved by the large audiences which have assembled for the first three lectures of the series.

LENNOX.

### The Climate of Jamaica.

The first consideration for those who desire to pay more than a flying visit to a tropical country is climate, and in this matter there has been serious misconception heretofore regarding Jamaica. As a matter of fact, the climate of Jamaica is as healthy as that of any tropical country in the world, and more healthy than that of most. This is shown by the mean of the birth and death-rates for the past five years. The mean birth-rate has been 36.6 per thousand; the death-rate, 22.92. Of this latter, 1.75 per thousand died under the age of one year. Diversified as is the surface of the island, from the high mountains of the centre to the rolling plains of the seaboard, the temperature is, of course, very varied. Near the summits of the hills it is a sub-tropical, varying from 63° to 75° at 3 p.m. At the sea-level it ranges from 75° to 90°. But here the heat is tempered by a fresh sea-breeze that blows all day and a cool land-breeze that sweeps over the hot plains from the mountains all night. It is in the imprudent exposure to this cold breeze, when heated by exercise, that the danger of tropical fever lies. It is so pleasant that new-comers, who carefully avoid a draught at home, are tempted to enjoy the sense of refreshing coolness, forgetting the danger from the sudden check to the action of the pores. If the sun in the West Indies were as dangerous as it is supposed to be, the white male population must long ago have died out, for they walk and ride in the sun, play cricket all day, and otherwise disport themselves after the manner of Englishmen, without any ill effects; but I do not think the example can prudently be followed by persons fresh from higher latitudes.—SIR HENRY A. BLAKE, Governor of Jamaica, in *North American Review* for February.